

BISHOP COLENSO'S
EXAMINATION
OF THE PENTATEUCH
EXAMINED

G. S. DREW. M.A.

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WITH

AN APPENDIX.

BY
G. S. DREW, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "SCRIPTURE LANDS, IN CONNEXION WITH THEIR HISTORY,"
"REASONS OF FAITH," &c.

" Ei δὲ τοῖς ἔχεινον (sc. Μωϋσέως) γράμμασιν οὐ πιστεύετε,
πῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς ῥήμασι πιστεύσετε ; "

"If ye believe not his (Moses') writings, how can ye believe
my words ?"

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1863.

THIS HISTORY "is evidently written . . . with such particularity of time, and place, and person, and circumstance, as none but an eye-witness can be reasonably supposed to have preserved; and with such strict impartiality as leaves no room to doubt that it delivers every circumstance without any attempt to disguise or alter it. The relation may therefore be depended on, as faithfully drawn up by some EYE-WITNESS. . . . Also it carries internal evidence, that this eye-witness was NO OTHER THAN MOSES HIMSELF, and that it was written with the strongest regard to truth . . . this discovering itself in coincidences so minute, so latent, so indirect, and evidently undesigned, that nothing could have produced them but reality and truth, influencing the mind, and directing the pen of the legislator."—*Graves.*

PREFACE.

It is not any love of controversy which has induced me to publish the following “Extracts from Correspondence,” on the subjects brought forward by Dr. Colenso in his recent volume. I have taken this course under the influence of entirely different motives, to some of which I must here, for a few moments, ask for the attention of my readers.

In the first place, the history of the Exodus and of the Wanderings has occupied my attention for many years ; and some aspects and details of it I have examined on the spot, with helps and appliances rarely granted even to those who have enjoyed that advantage. In another work I have already given the results of these investigations. But, as one of the parochial clergy to whom Dr. Colenso (pp. vi, xiv) has specially alluded, I felt bound again to bring them for-

ward in this manner, thinking that I might thus render acceptable help to my brethren in the ministry, as well as to some in the congregations unto the service of which we have been appointed as “watchmen and stewards of the Lord.” If, indeed, it be true, as Dr. Colenso suggests, that we are as negligent of the *studious* investigation of Scripture, as he tells us (p. vi.) he was when in our position, then, indeed, we are all ill prepared for trials which he has made more distressing, if not more dangerous. The number of persons still “professing godliness,” to whom such a book as his is peculiarly welcome, we well know is large in our parishes, and even in our congregations. And the damage wrought by the ignorant flippancy, which is echoed by them,—from the reviews and the newspapers, which are the only sources of their information—in their hasty conversations “by the way,” is not so concealed from us, as Dr. Colenso and some of his admirers imagine. We have long mourned over this evil influence in deepest sorrow and anxiety, and we are at this time struggling against it. But little could we have thought that our distress in the hard strife we are thus maintaining, would be aggravated as it has

been by seeing one of our bishops go over to share in these counsels of the ungodly, and to take his seat amongst those scorners of God's word.

Feeling thus deeply in sympathy with my brethren in the ministry, and knowing that every one should do what he can in showing the value of this new "help to unbelief," I have employed, in the work, hours which could only be found in the intervals of more urgent occupation. In carrying out my purpose, I have devoted some preliminary pages to the careful definition of the ground *on which alone* the questions raised by Dr. Colenso can be logically argued. This I had already defined at greater length, and with more fulness, in my *Reasons of Faith*. And if I have made larger extracts than may appear seemly from this volume, and from my *Scripture Lands, in connexion with their History*,—my apology is, not only that I thought these pages might fall into the hands of some who have not seen these books, but that the passages here brought forward from them furnish the most direct reply to many of Dr. Colenso's arguments. Even if I had foreseen the line he has taken, I could not have

written anything more expressly suited to encounter it.

As for the manner in which I have spoken of him and of his volume, I have not forgotten, in adopting it, the position he still, professedly and outwardly, holds in our communion. I say “professedly and outwardly,” because every thinking man must see that he has virtually denied the very existence of the Church, in dealing as he has done with the foundations on which it rests; and has, therefore, in fact abdicated his episcopal position, however long he may yet nominally hold it. It is not, then, in angry resentment because he has brought contempt on the character of his order by his unfaithfulness, and on its attainments by his ignorance, that I have written as I have done; but because I regard him as having stripped off his vestments, and descended from his throne, and as having taken his place amongst those of whom the servant of God must speak with severity, if he speaks with faithfulness.

If, however, in any instance, I have spoken in a manner unwarranted even by these considerations, I must plead in excuse the necessary disadvantages as regards time and circumstance,

under which my work has been carried forward. And for the same reason I must ask forgiveness for any error or ungracefulness of expression which eyes experienced in criticism may detect in these pages. May they, by the Divine blessing, be made serviceable to the cause in the service of which they have been written.

London, December 24th, 1862.



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COLENZO'S EXAMINATION OF THE PENTATEUCH EXAMINED.

— You are right in supposing that I have carefully looked into this new “Examination of the Pentateuch,” the value of which, as you remark, I am able to estimate under circumstances of some advantage. And I need hardly say that the opinion I have thus formed of the book agrees perfectly with your own, which, indeed, is that of every well-informed and thoughtful man whose judgment I have heard respecting it. I do not, however, sympathise with you in your anxiety as to the mischievousness of its influence. My own belief is that, in this instance, we shall witness a remarkable manifestation of that law of God’s moral government whereby He employs unworthy agencies for the purification of His Church. You remember that wonderful illustration of the law I am referring to, which is given by Isaiah, as he repeats the Divine announcement, “I will send him (the Assyrian

king) against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him charge *Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so*; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.” So will this book, and with it will all the “offences which must needs come” in this imperfect state, be overruled; and the knowledge of this fact will enable us to regard not only patiently, but even hopefully, many things that would otherwise occasion anxiety, as well as resentment and indignation. We may well be tolerant, if not complacent, in our feelings towards such agencies, when we think of the ends for which they may be used.

More, however, than such acquiescence is needed, or this temper is liable to degenerate into an apathy and indolence that may even become culpable. We ourselves must work in furthering the process which we believe is going forward; and so, while we are doing that which devolves upon us, in strenuous conflict with the assailant evil, our individual purification, and the advancement of the truth of God, and of His cause, will be accomplished. I think this duty is laid upon some of us at the present time. That this long-announced, and now widely-circulated, volume is narrow and feeble, and that it has been written by one who is absurdly incompetent to the task he has undertaken, is the judgment which has been passed upon it by all whose judgment is worthy of regard. Men’s feelings, on first reading it, have strangely

blended wonder with indignation, at seeing such unworthiness obtruded in such an office upon our notice. When we see one of our fathers in God defacing our family records, one of the rulers of the Church tearing into fragments the very charter of the kingdom in which his throne is set,—the sight may well awaken our impatience: godly anger and indignation are naturally aroused by it. Yet, in remembrance of the law to which I just adverted, we must suppress these feelings; as, again, we must also ask if it does not now summon us to work with Him Who is ever present to cleanse and defend His Church, in accomplishing the ends for which He has permitted this afflictive and humiliating visitation.

In this view I will ask you to join with me in regarding this volume, and to give me your attention while, in the course of a detailed examination of its statements, I show you some of the uses which I think may be made of its “new” investigation into the Mosaic history. Indeed, apart from this purpose, I should have no motive for adding to the labours of days already sufficiently laborious, the task of writing out these pages of our correspondence. It has been already shown in scores of reviews of the book, that there is nothing which is either new or true in one of the arguments put forth in it. Here, however, in taking some methods of my own to make this fact apparent, I have a further purpose; for I hope to make it clear to any one who will read these pages to the end, that although,

alas ! unwittingly, our examiner of the Pentateuch has not only failed in his intended purpose, but has further helped to do the work unto which, by a two-fold vow, both as priest and bishop, he pledged himself, in “withstanding and convincing gainsayers,” and in “driving away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God’s word.”

Considering the greatness of the enterprise its author meditates by means of it, and the weight of his prediction, that it will have the effect, in “five years hence,” of preventing “the more hopeful and intelligent of our young men from entering the ministry of the Church of England, with clear consciences,”—one can hardly help expressing, at the outset, some wonder at its stripling aspect as it fronts the mighty hosts whose overthrow, through its agency, is so imminent, and is to be so complete. Ranged and arrayed before the holy mountain, as far upwards as the ancient temple that crowns its summit, are the innumerable and mighty defenders of the faith against whom this lightly-clad adventurer presents himself. In their van, and now immediately in view, we look on the heavy-armed leaders of German and English erudition. Their massive volumes, filled with the exhaustive thought, and hived wisdom of long, studious years, are there before us, and—what are our feelings when we see this slender, this newly-conceived, as well as newly-born, octavo, threatening them with such utter defeat and demolition! Yet it is true, indeed, that overcoming

might may compact itself within the smallest frames: deadly fumes and essences that are potent enough for the destruction of hosts may be condensed into a vase that can be carried by a child; and, remembering this, we feel that even the mighty challenge of this neat *brochure* of one hundred and ninety pages must not be despised. Thus meditating, then, we open our new “Critical Examination of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua.” And the hastiest glance, while we are cutting its pages, is enough to explain the bold, defiant steps of the assailant who is advancing so confidently on his great enterprise.

May I again recur to my figure, and say that the holy mountain, and the venerable sanctuary that crowns it, and that vast array of armed defenders, are evidently not in the view of our assailant! Though in his thin accoutrement he is in fact stepping forth against them, most plainly they are not seen by him. In other words, our first glance over his “examination” shows that Dr. Colenso has taken up the Pentateuch, and has searched into and measured it, in the same mood wherein he might have examined any chance volume of history that has been written by an English pen within the last eighteen months—which, you know, is the time he has devoted to his investigations, and to the labour of giving their results to the clergy, and especially to the lay members of the Church to whom he so solemnly (p. xxxvi) commends them. Had the book “critically examined” by him given an account sent

home last year, by “our own correspondent,” of some Mormon emigration, he could not have “examined” it with more entire unconsciousness of any special associations investing it, or anything marked and serious in the claims alleged on its behalf. No other book that has ever floated by any chance into Dr. Colenso’s hands, can have fastened his attention more exclusively upon the things contained within it, apart from any regard to the peculiarity of the character in which it is put forward. While, as for his acquaintance with the now immensely-accumulated learning which has shed such marvellous light both on the external relations of the book, and its internal coherences, he himself tells us that it was not till last year, “when he wrote to a friend in England, and requested him to send some of the best books for entering on such a course of study,” that he had any knowledge of even the commonest works that have been written on the subject.

In short, it is quite plain that, as might be suspected on our first glance at the slight attire in which our challenger presents himself, he has stepped forward upon ground of the nature of which he is either oblivious or ignorant. And our part, before listening in detail to his arguments, and reckoning with them individually, as I propose to do, must be to ascertain and define the terms on which such an investigation should be conducted. You know that, in saying this, I am not providing for myself any shelter from the closest grappling with our assailant on every one of the points

which he has chosen. Thus I propose to meet him ; but, before doing so, we must take some preliminary steps in obedience to a logical necessity that is inexorable.

Here, then, let me recall the words in which I just now spoke of these Mosaic writings as the records of a family, and the charter of a kingdom. This language accurately describes them, and it is essential that we should here fasten our attention steadfastly on the significance of the description. It implies, what is on all hands an acknowledged fact, that, instead of these documents having come into our hands by some fortuitous transmission, we have received them from an existing and recognised Society, in whose custody they have been deposited, and which has ever presented them for the interpretation of its purposes, and for the witness of its authority. Through its living voices this Society, the Church, announces that it has been established here, in this world, and among men, for certain ends. And if we demand from it an explanation of these ends, it presents The Bible to us. as its answer. Its historical existence and its antiquity—which is greater than that of any portion of this volume—being, as they must be, acknowledged, it stands before us so connected with these writings, that they cannot be thought of apart from its existence, even if we will not acknowledge its authority.

In other words, it is for the explanation of facts, as unquestionable as its own existence, that the Bible must be looked into and investigated ; and, before we examine

any portion of it, there is what, for want of another word, I am obliged to call a presumption in its favour. For “those demands on our respectful deference, which you must acknowledge the Church has on every one approaching it, decisively forbid any light supercilious contempt of the solemn testimony with which it claims attention. You may turn away from an individual or a sect which thus addresses you, but you cannot, without blame, neglect this demand from an institution which is, at all events, older and more widely extended than any other in existence. Voices uttered by this Society in past ages, which are deepening as the years roll on, and are echoed by the best men around us, demand, with most weighty emphasis, that we give heed to the Book which it has solemnly delivered over to us. ‘Examine these writings with diligence, search them carefully,’ they say, ‘and you will therein find the statements, and the vouchers, of our Divine claim on your allegiance.’ Now, this language must, at all events, be heeded: we have no alternative but to employ the most attentive and reverential care in our examination of the volume which has been so solemnly, and by so great an authority, placed in our hands

Without question this must be conceded; and, for the present, I only ask for this admission, when we now open our document, and look at first discursively throughout its contents. We glance over its pages from Genesis to Revelation; and, while thus looking through it, we have in view the character in which we have

received it, viz. as an Exposition of what the Church is, and of what she holds. So regarding it, then, we perceive that, mainly and prominently, it is a record: instinctively, and, as soon as we open it, we say this book contains a history. There are, indeed, as we also see, many other things in it besides history: prayers, and hymns, and contemplations; the wisest precepts, the profoundest reasoning, the most earnest exhortations—are contained in it; but chiefly we see it is concerned with facts, which begin from the most remote period, and run on for more than forty centuries. It is an historical narrative, around and about which the materials of the volume have been cast and shaped

“ Moreover, we shall also see, and even on this first discursive view of it, that most of its historical statements are closely implicated and intertwined with facts in past times, about which independent testimony makes us as infallibly assured as we can be concerning any facts now immediately around us. Familiar names of places and events, and of men, continually meet the eye even of him who reads most superficially, so that I may say there is hardly one of its writers who does not mention well-known persons or circumstances with which, and with whom, our historical consciousness—by which I mean our sense as well as knowledge of the past—has made us perfectly familiar. And thus we already see that, so far, one of the statements with which the Book was commended to us is justified: its contents obviously agree with that account which

described it as containing historical notices of the origin, as well as an authorised description of the purpose, of this ancient Society, the Church, whose fortunes have, in fact, been implicated with the most momentous occurrences in history.

“ Moreover, as the first impression it makes on us is, in this view, so different from what this would have been if its contents were of a purely meditative or abstract character, let me next ask you to observe how they suggest, and even invite and court, inquiries through which the general trustworthiness, at all events, of the volume may be ascertained. . . . Where the history is fullest and most detailed, there it takes its course most freely amongst—it is most intimately, nay, even intricately, involved with—events that are not only written down in books, but are, besides, recorded, and are now vividly picturing themselves before the eye—on sculptures, and coins, and monuments ; in the opened ruins, in the tombs, and palaces, and temples, with which our modern researches, whereof the most important are most recent, have made us accurately familiar.

“ Here, then, we are in possession of means for testing the general veracity, the accuracy and faithfulness, of these historians. Instead of shrinking away from, they invite, in almost every page they have written, an inquiry into their trustworthiness. We might carry it forward with respect to any one of them . . . But the especial purpose now in view requires us to

look first into the New Testament for those points of the connexion of Scripture with facts that are otherwise well known; for those indubitable signs of its oneness with historical realities, whereby we may assure ourselves that this Record has its roots and fibres, and the channels of its vitality, amongst the most certain facts of our existence.”¹

What the results of the inquiry which is so conducted are, is well known. It may be supposed that Dr. Colenso will not object to acknowledge that, at all events, the main occurrences related by the Evangelists have been authenticated. Any admission more exact and comprehensive on his part can hardly be assumed, after reading his suggestion as to the “way in which the interpretation of the New Testament” may be affected by what he has proved as to the “unhistorical character of the Pentateuch” (p. xxix). Still, even this admission will be sufficient for our purpose, which is, at present, nothing more than to indicate some of the considerations that need to be taken account of while any portion of this book is being examined, as well as the spirit in which our examination should be conducted. For, observe, the acknowledgment that the Evangelists were, in the main, true historians, carries us upon firm ground into the presence of Jesus Christ. Whatever deference we are prepared to render unto Him, even if it be only a little more than might be due to any other “educated and devout Jew of that

¹ *Reasons of Faith*, Introd. and Chap. i.

age" (p. xxxi), must, at least in part, be likewise rendered to that Body—the Jewish Church—with which He identified Himself, and from which the Christian Church claims to be descended. We know that He, even this Wondrous Man, before Whom we find ourselves compelled to bow in such deep reverence, after we have once, by accepting the Evangelists as true historians, gone into His presence—"avowed His membership of the Jewish Church, and recognised its Divine authority; that He ascribed unto its temple, its priesthood, and its worship, a heavenly origin. All this is as much matter of fact as that He actually lived. We may yet have to ascertain the influence under which this was done by Him; but this, at least, is certain, that in this Church He lived as one of its members, and that, as a Divine institution, He constantly acknowledged it. And so, as respects the Scriptures, which that Church presented to its members and to the world, just as the Christian Church now presents the entire volume in our hands, of which they form the greater part—viz., as containing the charter of its authority, and the declaration of its purposes—we know that in this character He accepted and employed them. If He did not formally assert their authority, we know that He habitually assumed it. On this assumption He continually taught and reasoned; indeed, much of what He said is quite unintelligible, except on a supposition that would be inconsistent with the conclusion respecting Him which we have already reached, unless we admit that He

cribed authority to these Jewish Writings, and acknowledged their genuineness and their authenticity. It is quite true that we cannot claim any of His words in sanction of opinions that were then current and popular among the Jews with respect to their sacred books; on the contrary, much of His teaching was a direct assault on those opinions. But it is not less true that He ascribed to these same writings substantial claims on men's regards: He acknowledged them as a collection of authenticated documents that are worthy of reverent heed and of studious perusal, and from which decisive evidence, and proofs beyond appeal, might be derived.

“This must be admitted. We are not more certain that He of whom I am speaking is there really and actually before us, than we are that He thus spake of, and thus looked upon, those same documents which have been placed, with such demands for attention to them, in our hands. He habitually gave them the title which is equivalent to the direct assertion of their authority! In marked distinction from all other writings then in circulation, He referred to them as ‘The Scriptures,’ and He so referred to them as to sanction each one of those divisions into which they were then classified . . . Examine the steps which we have trodden towards this conclusion, and you will see that nothing at present in your view is clearer and more certain than this vision of Him into whose presence the writers of the New Testameut have carried

us, there worshipping in the Jewish Church, and, in the character of one of its members, taking up the Scriptures of the Old Testament as if they had, in fact, that purpose and authority which the Christian Church ascribes to the volume now in our hands, of which they form the larger part.”²

Here, then—assuming the identity of our Scriptures of the Old Testament with those writings as they existed in the days of Christ—we begin to see the aspect in which they must be regarded, and, consequent on this, the spirit in which any examination of them must be conducted.³ Most evidently it is, at the outset, a logical error, in which Dr. Colenso cannot be followed, to take up these Books of Moses just as we might take up any other documents that have come by any chance conveyance into our possession. That same reason which compels us to look reverently towards the whole Bible as the Interpretation and the Charter of the most ancient Society at this time in existence, is indefinitely strengthened with respect to this portion of the volume, since we have received it, at the hands of Christ Himself, as being similarly related to the Society with which He was identified. And we might, as reasonably, ignore the facts that the documents to be examined were written in Hebrew, and not in English; that they are couched in the free language of the East, with its exuberant imagery and abrupt transitions, and not in the style of the mere

² *Reasons of Faith*, Chap. iii. pp. 51–55.

³ Appendix.

literal and statistical documents with which this “examination” has confounded them,—as forget that they come accredited in the manner I have described, and that all these venerable associations are around them. It does not, indeed, *immediately* follow, from these considerations, that we should implicitly accept these Writings. As I have shown, in the work from which the above extracts are taken, there are several steps between this conclusion, if it can be reached, and those we have thus far ascertained,—which, you observe, have regard solely to certain aspects of these ancient books, and to claims on their behalf which, on the plainest grounds of reasoning, should be in the mind of every one by whom they are examined.

There is a certain temper and attitude of thought which, I say, is logically incumbent upon every such inquirer. Nor, again, can he reasonably take the first step in his investigation by rigorously searching into particulars. He may not yet cross-question the authors of these writings as to the details of their narrative, until he has taken other preliminary movements by way of surveying the ground of his inquiry. He must, first of all, ascertain the general relations of the narrative to the place and times with which it is professedly connected, and then he must consider the shape into which it has been cast, and its internal relations and coherence. He must ask if it has the aspect of a native of the region in which it is said to have originated; and if it wears the well-

known features of historical trustworthiness? In other words, he should next have regard to the written and monumental information which synchronizes with the period to which the writings in question have been ascribed. He must look to those "points of connexion between the Old Testament and ascertained facts and documents bearing on the past, which have otherwise been securely guaranteed.

"He must here confront this history with the results of recent researches in Egypt and Arabia, in Eastern Syria, and amongst the ruins on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. He must examine it in the light of that intelligence which is so vividly picturing itself before every eye, in the cleared and opened ruins, in the temples, and palaces, and tombs with which 'Eastern views' have made us all so accurately familiar. And, as is well known, that cross-questioning of these innumerable witnesses to our documents, which they have themselves invited, has been carried on most vigorously. The result also is well known. It has satisfied the most jealous, nay, even the most hostile, scrutiny which has been brought to bear on them; their trustworthiness as authentic documents has been marvellously—nay, may I not say, in some instances, miraculously?—established. You are familiar with innumerable works, the purpose and contents of which I am describing in this manner . . . And, along with them, regard should at this point be also had to those other evidences which may

be distinguished as ‘internal,’ and which are found in what have been well called the ‘undesigned coincidences’ of this volume. Connect them with the testimony we gather from the coins, and sculptures, and inscriptions in our Museum, from books and photographs which are accessible to every one—and, I think, you must acknowledge that, at all events, the general trustworthiness of these historical books has been established.”⁴

Here, I think, we have a fair statement of considerations which are necessarily preliminary to any such detailed and rigorous inquisition into the accuracy of the Mosaic history as that which is before us. This general character and aspect of the volume, these “surroundings” of the ground on which such an inquiry should be conducted, must, in the outset, be taken into our account. It is indeed conceivable that all these and other presumptions in favour of these writings may be neutralized by the errors and incoherences that a “critical examination” may detect in them: it may be, notwithstanding all these depositions in their favour, that their “story” is “unhistorical,” and has been framed by some unknown editor, who, “without any more consciousness of doing wrong than Homer or the early Roman annalists had,” compiled it “from the ancient legends of his people;”—this is possible, and as the consequence of discovering that such is indeed their character, we shall then have to grapple

⁴ *Reasons of Faith*, Chap. iv. pp. 58–60.

with the problem how such presumptions and arguments in favour of the historical veracity of these Scriptures could have arisen. But surely they must be well-established inconsistencies, errors that are conclusive and inevitable, that may involve us in such a troublesome dilemma: and, remembering the ground we stand on, and the subject we are dealing with, we should be watchful against mere suspiciousness and captiousness, and against careless haste, as well as firm in the purpose that our intended inquiry shall be impartially and searchingly conducted.

All this, then, being—and I repeat it has been of necessity—premised, I now proceed to accept Dr. Colenso's invitation. I will “watch carefully every step of his argument, with a full consciousness of the momentous results to which it leads, and with a determination to test *severely* (the italics are his own), with all the power and skill I can bring to the work, but yet *honestly* and *fairly*, the truth of every inference he has drawn, and every conclusion to which he has arrived.”

Including the “Introductory,” and “Concluding Remarks,” his examination is comprised in twenty-two chapters. But their entire substance may be ranged under less than one-fifth of this number of divisions; and such a classification will be more convenient for my purpose, as I will here venture to suggest it would have been also for his own. For, whatever the cause may be, we fail to discern the mathe-

matical sequence and order in his arrangement of his subject which his attainments would lead us to expect. Thus, in Chaps. xvii.-xix., he gives sundry considerations in proof of the *impossibility* of the number of the Israelites being that which, for the sake of the arguments of the chapters preceding, he had already assumed it actually was. Surely these later reasonings should have been adduced first in order, so that his argument might have run in some such form as this:—“Here are considerations which show that the Israelites could not have been two millions in number, at the time of the Exodus; and here, in further confirmation of this result, if that be needed, observe how inadequate for such a multitude are the resources of the wilderness.” I think this would have been a more natural arrangement of his materials. His neglect of it brings us afresh, in the later chapters of his book, on topics which have already been partially disposed of. Similar instances of like confusion might be mentioned; so that, if we are to make any effective progress, I am, in fact, compelled to substitute for his own, another classification of his material, and I will accordingly arrange it under these four heads, which, I believe, you will find embrace the whole of it, *viz.* :—

I. Considerations of difficulty with respect to the migration of Jacob’s family and household into Egypt.

II. Similar considerations with respect to the

Exodus, and the journeyings of the Israelites through the wilderness.

III. Difficulties in connexion with the Mosaic polity, and with the circumstances of the conquest; and

IV. General considerations with respect to the statements of Scripture upon subjects that touch on geology, and on other sciences.

We will take these four points in order. And beginning, therefore, with the “considerations of difficulty respecting the migration of Jacob’s family and household into Egypt”—let us first collect some of the notices which the sacred writer has given of the circumstances of this movement. He tells us that

“Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan. And take your father, and your households, and come unto me; and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. . . . And God spake to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, . . . Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt. . . . And Jacob rose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones. . . . And they took their cattle, and their substance which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him: his sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters, and all his seed, brought he with him into Egypt.”

The names of his immediate descendants are then given, and we are further told, that after their arrival Joseph welcomed “his brethren and his father’s house,”

and, under this designation, introduced them to Pharaoh, who then assigned to them the territory which they were to occupy and cultivate. Goshen is the name given to it by the writer. From his description of it, it is at once identified with that wide-stretching, and, in its upper part, well-watered plain which lies between the Tanitic branch of the Nile and the desert country which thence stretches to the East. This plain had been raised gradually by the deposits of the river; and, while firm and hard enough for the occupation of a large community, it was, on account of its formation, of exuberant richness and fertility. In this respect it was, indeed, the “best of the land,” though, under the circumstances of the lower kingdom of Egypt at this time, and especially from the absence of any inhabitants to bring it under cultivation, “nakedness” was a designation specially appropriate to considerable portions of this territory.

Such is the narrative. And, reading it trustingly,—as I have shown we should read an historical document presented to us as this has been—and throwing upon it at the same time all the light which can be thrown on it from contemporaneous information, we find it describes in the clearest and simplest manner a migration, from the patriarchal territory south of Judæa, into Egypt, of the entire community which had been established there for the previous two centuries, and to the chieftaincy of which Jacob had recently succeeded. This community had been considerable in the days of

his ancestors, and it was now largely augmented by his own acquisitions in Mesopotamia, and by the possessions and retainers that had gathered round him during the thirty years which had elapsed since his return into Syria. We see, in consequence, that it was a considerable body which, following him as their patriarch and leader, went down with him into Egypt ; and though the historian only mentions the names of Jacob's immediate connexion, we find him distinctly alluding, under the designation of the patriarch's "household," to the vast caravan by which he was accompanied. It must, at the least, have numbered many hundreds ; and indeed thousands may have been comprised in it.

There is reason to believe that the Hamite dynasty, which had conquered the lower country, was reigning in Egypt at the period when they "went down" to their new settlement, and that at this time all the military force of the Pharaoh who invited them was employed in the defence of his southern frontier against the kings of the upper country. We recognise his policy in encouraging the settlement, on the northern province of his kingdom, of the robust and hardy people who, for upwards of two centuries, had maintained their ground on the wilderness pastures of Syria against the predatory Bedouin of the adjacent desert. Unto himself and his subjects the establishment of such a people on the north-eastern frontier of his territory, which was so exposed to the attacks of

those same marauders, was in the highest degree advantageous; while, for the sons of Israel themselves, an exchange, from the bleak and inhospitable camping ground on the south of Hebron, to the rich estates of the Delta, was not less welcome and attractive. And the change would be especially agreeable to those who were at that time holding, through their father, ascendancy in the community. They had grown up in the plains of Mesopotamia, and had recently left the most luxuriant portions of Upper Palestine; and now Egypt, with its genial climate and exuberant soil, and with its abundant pasture-grounds, was the very place which, of all others, would be chosen by them.

Thus, taking into account the political condition of the Egyptian kingdom, and the relation, in respect to climate and soil, between that country and the territory to which Jacob had succeeded, and also bearing in mind the history and character of the family which was then uppermost in the patriarchal settlement—the account of their immigration, as above given, is seen to be singularly consonant with all the circumstances amidst which it took place; and the more definitely and vividly those circumstances are realised, the more harmoniously does the occurrence thus described by Moses agree, and, so to speak, fit in with the condition of things, adjacent to and surrounding it, which is thus brought into our view.

This suitableness could hardly have altogether escaped Dr. Colenso's notice, in the course of his

eighteen months' study of the Pentateuch, with the help which Ewald, Kurtz, and Hengstenberg, have given him: among the many facts which he "freely admits (page 139) were to himself new, till within a comparatively recent period," this also could hardly fail to have occurred to him. It is not, however, brought into his reader's view, if it was in his own. But, indeed, there was no reason why it should be, since it appears there is one line in the statement of the writer of this "story" which betrays its "unhistorical" (=fictitious, p. xvii) character! This southward movement of the caravan which we have seen "going down" into Egypt never took place as Moses has described,—or, rather, by Moses it never was described at all; the "story" has been compiled by some unknown writer "from the ancient legends of his people," because, says Dr. Colenso, "it appears to me certain that the writer means to say," in his enumeration of Jacob's kindred, "that Hezron and Hamul were *born in the land of Canaan*, and were among the seventy persons who came into Egypt with Jacob Now Judah was forty-two years old, according to the story," when this happened, and Hezron and Hamul were his great-grandchildren. Hence we must give up this point, and this, he adds, is "to give up an essential part of the whole story."

This is the first "prominent instance" of what he calls "remarkable contradictions" and "plain impossibilities," which Dr. Colenso has alleged to show

that the “books of the Pentateuch cannot be regarded as true narratives of actual historical matters of fact.” So it is, however, that the only “remarkable contradiction” which can be seen in this part of the “story” is between Dr. Colenso’s version of it, and that which the sacred writer himself has given. The passage referred to, as we find it in the history, runs thus:—

“And the sons of Judah ; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.”

But thus is it given in the “examination”:—

“And the sons of Judah, Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah ; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan ; and the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul.”

That peculiarity of the verse, which this comparison will at once show you, Dr. Colenso has—from no worse cause, I really believe, than that rash and careless haste which marks his book throughout—suppressed by his substitution of a semicolon for a full-stop, and by the omission of the emphatic “were ;” that peculiarity, I say, makes “it appear certain to me,”—as I believe it must to every attentive reader of the passage—that the writer here means to say that Hezron and Hamul were *not* born in the land of Canaan, but that, like those members of Jacob’s kindred given in v. 21 of the same enumeration, they were born *after* the patriarch had descended into Egypt. Nor does this conclusion, as any reader of the English Bible may see, depend on the mere punctuation of the

passage; for he will observe that, *in this instance only*, is the substantive verb employed. (Representing the נִיְהָיָה of the Hebrew, it is emphatically given in the Septuagint Ἐγένοντο δὲ.) Thus, even on the surface of our translation, it is manifest that, for some reason, Hezron and Hamul are specially distinguished from the other members of the family in the midst of which their names occur; and we may feel certain that if we could have examined the papyrus on which Moses wrote this passage in his history, we should have seen this line, “And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul,” introduced by him as a parenthesis. It was so introduced by him for this plain reason, that, on a former sheet of the same roll, he had already given some remarkable details concerning Er and Onan: while, in a subsequent passage (Num. xxvi. 21), he has to mention Hezron and Hamul again among the heads of the family of Judah. (This, I may add, supplies an answer to Dr. Colenso’s question (p. 24), “why the sons of Pharez should be named, and not the sons of Zarah?” It was plainly because the posterity of this one of Tamar’s children had never obtained a like distinction.) In addition to all this, it is hardly necessary again to recall the reader’s attention to the fact, that while there is no statement in the list (Gen. xlvi. 8-27) which justifies the assumption that all contained in it had been born before the immigration—the phrase “coming into Egypt” being plainly equivalent to “settled in” the country—there

are names given in the passage which expressly negative that view; *e.g.* in the mention of the ten sons of Benjamin, and of the sons of Joseph also, who it is expressly said, were “born to him in Egypt.”

If any further explanation of Dr. Colenso’s difficulty is required, he has given it abundantly, and with really touching and wonderful simplicity, in his own large quotations from Kurtz and Hengstenberg upon this subject.⁵ He has done us service, however, in calling our attention to the passage in this manner, since, as you will see, he has really brought into view another “undesigned coincidence,” which, I believe, has not before been noticed. Singularly and strikingly does this *parenthetical* allusion to Hezron and Hamul agree

⁵ He does not, however, allude to the explanation of his difficulty which is suggested by Lightfoot, in his *Observations on Genesis* (*Works*, vol. ii. p. 347), in this passage: “The words ‘at that time,’ in the beginning of this chapter (xxxviii.), have not so much any reference to the exact time of Judah’s marriage as to the miscarriage of Er and Onan, which befell not long after Joseph was sold; and so teach of his requital in his children for the sale of his righteous brother.”—Indeed the probability is that, according to Eastern usage, Judah married seven or eight years before the events mentioned in this chapter, and that the words, שָׁמַעַת רַבְבָּת denote the *period* of their occurrence, rather than any precise *date*, according to a use of that expression whereof Dr. Colenso will see numerous examples in any Hebrew Concordance. In this case it is quite possible that Hezron and Hamul might have been born before the “going down into Egypt.” This shows the utter groundlessness of the objection, though doubtless the true explanation of it is that which is given above.

with the statements concerning Judah's age, which Dr. Colenso has taken such pains to bring into notice for the sake of impugning the veracity of the inspired writer. Do not the Psalmist's words (Ps. vii. 14-17) occur to you in this instance?—Moreover, in this same discussion, our "examiner" has done us further service by means of an inconsistency which, indeed, is elsewhere obtruded, and which shows beyond any question that some influence, for which I cannot find any other word but an infatuation, was ruling him in the composition of his volume. "Here," he says, "I gladly pay a tribute of respect to the ability and *candour* with which Kurtz generally writes. For instance," he adds in a note, "I do not remember to have met anywhere in Kurtz with a sweeping charge of *dishonest concealment of the truth* (they are his own italics) made against his opponents generally, as in the following passage of Hengstenberg." Now this language immediately follows his own assertion: "Nothing, indeed, has more tended to convince my own mind of the hollowness of the cause which he (Kurtz) advocates, than *the efforts* made by himself and Hengstenberg, in this and other instances (as we shall see hereafter), *to force the text of Scripture to say what it plainly does not say*, in order," &c. (pp. 24, 25). As again he elsewhere (pp. 29, 113) tells us, "It is painful to observe the *shifts* to which so eminent an author has recourse;" and he speaks of "the *contrivances* resorted to (by Kurtz), to the utter sacrifice of all historical truth and consistency."

There is nothing in the “following,” or in any other, “passage from Hengstenberg” that at all resembles *such accusations of dishonest concealment* as are brought forward in these complaints. And were it not for the vestment in which Dr. Colenso can still clothe himself, and for the service which we shall see his book may be made to render to the cause unto which he has been consecrated, its inconsistency and its bitterness would justify us in closing its pages at the end of this second chapter, and refusing to hear another word which he has to say upon its subject.

His position, however, and our purpose in examining this volume, being what they are—we will go with him to the end of it. Supposing, then, that this line concerning Hezron and Hamul will not convince us that we are under an illusion in regarding the above account of the Hebrew migration into Egypt as “a true narrative of actual historical matters of fact”—of one thing the Bishop is quite certain, viz. that, at all events, “not more than seventy persons” went there in Jacob’s company. Among the views which he “freely admits were new to himself, till within a comparatively recent period,” this one, that a large caravan of settlers accompanied the patriarch in his movement from his ancestral territory, is not included. He still holds fast by the old supposition,—which, indeed, has quite unaccountably been accepted by most commentators—that only Jacob’s immediate relatives went with him. Unto this view Dr. Colenso (chap. xix) tenaciously

adheres, for the sake of introducing an after-difficulty. But, assuming its truth, there is another and still more serious difficulty flowing from it, of which he makes no mention. And it is this: What, in that case, became of the remainder of the tribe? Even after we have taken into account the secession of Esau and his followers, it appears certain that the patriarchal encampment must have grown by this time into dimensions as large as those of the Jehalín tribe, which now holds the same position, and the sheikh of which is under an engagement to furnish one thousand armed men for the Pasha's service in any extraordinary emergency. Then, to this his ancestral "household," as it is called, the retainers of Jacob, of his sons, were added. For, though Dr. Colenso "does not see any signs in Gen. xxxii., xxxiii., of Jacob having any such a body of servants,"⁶ every other person who has even cursorily read those chapters, must have immediately and plainly seen that a very considerable "body" was thus accompanying him. Indeed, such

⁶ ".... Thy servant Jacob saith thus, . . . I have oxen and asses, flocks and *men-servants, and women-servants*. . . . Then Jacob divided the *people that was with him into two bands*. . . . He sent a present for Esau his brother; two hundred she-goats, twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes, twenty rams, thirty camels, forty kine, ten bulls, twenty she-asses, and ten foals. And he *delivered them into the hand of his servants*." (Gen. xxxii. 5, 7, 13-16.) Similar intimations as to the extent of his "company" are given in chap. xxxiii.—Yet Dr. Colenso (p. 114) says, "There is no sign in Gen. xxxii., xxxiii., to which Kurtz refers, of Jacob having any such a body of servants."

was the nature of the country over which these chapters represent the patriarch as then moving, he was there so close to the rocky fastnesses which were held at that time by the terrible Rephaim—that, except under the protection of a considerable escort, this route would have been impracticable. Many hundreds at least of armed men must have acknowledged his authority, and have been, therefore, added to the patriarchal encampment, when, on the death of his father, Jacob entered there on his inheritance. And, I ask, if all these men did not accompany him into Egypt, what became of them? Moreover, what, upon that supposition, is meant by the statement, that “Joseph said unto his brethren, and *to his father's house*, I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and *my father's house*, who were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me?” And why are the “seventy souls that were in Egypt” spoken of as being—not Hebrew, but—“of the house of Jacob, and coming out of his loins?”⁷ Since our “examiner of the Pentateuch” does not even allude to these difficulties, which beset him on his own hypothesis—we will hold to our assurance, that we were not under any illusion in believing that we saw a great multitude, under the guidance of the aged chieftain and his sons, going down, along the already beaten route, to their new settlements in Egypt, elated with the prospects which they saw were there opening before them.

⁷ *Scripture Lands*, p. 30, and Note.

And now, if we will fix our attention steadfastly on the features of their new settlement, and use the historical information which has been elsewhere given concerning the period when they arrived in it, we can imagine their condition and their employments during their stay in Egypt, and while the training was going forward which it was meant to give them. There they were, then, pasturing their flocks, or farming the ground which gave them such rich products, with such slender, inconsiderable toil, resisting the forays of the marauding tribes who hovered on their limits, and everywhere trafficking with their new compatriots for the luxuries which were so readily exchanged for the animal wealth in their possession. In this manner the retainers and dependants of the seventy would be employed, while they themselves—Joseph's brethren and their sons—had means of frequent intercourse with the higher classes who were their brother's associates in the country. The barges sailing up and down the canals, and the branches of the river bordering upon their villages, bore them towards Zoan, and Heliopolis, and Memphis. In those cities they were in intercourse—on terms of high consideration—with the upper ranks, the members of the higher castes, the rulers and leaders of the people. Nor would such occasions of intercourse cease with Joseph's death. His sons inherited his social rank, and many of his distinctions. Through Ephraim and Manasseh, the people still had the advantage of those opportunities of instruction, and of civilised advancement, that were needful for the purposes

of their settlement in Egypt. So that, in our conception of the state of the Hebrew people during the centuries of their Egyptian life, we must not only think of them as clustered together in village communities on the green spaces along the banks of the river, or as tending their flocks on the desert pastures that lie adjacent to the widely stretching plains of Goshen ; but as also occupying quarters in the great cities of the lower kingdom, in Memphis and On, in Pelusium and Zoan.⁸

In this manner they passed the two centuries, or thereabouts, of their occupation of the country. For this, doubtless, was the true period of the Hebrew settlement in Egypt,—as Dr. Colenso has sufficiently proved, in opposition to Kurtz and Kalisch, though he does not fail to let us know that his purpose in insisting so strenuously on this (shorter) period is the maintenance of some of his objections. We accept it, however; and now remark that somewhere about the middle of it, there was a change in the ruling dynasty of the kingdom, which is significantly indicated by the sacred writer's mention of a “new” (not “another”) king, “who knew not Joseph.” The ancient and mighty race, which had been driven southwards, and hitherto kept within the provinces of the Upper Nile, had at length succeeded in expelling their invaders, and in recovering their supremacy over the

⁸ *Scripture Lands, &c.*, pp. 29–31.

lower country, including the territory in which the Israelites were settled. This in consequence had become relatively much smaller, now that it was included in an empire which stretched five hundred miles beyond the boundaries of their former kingdom. Their numbers, however, had largely multiplied. Doubtless many of them, unfaithful to their sacred trust, had been absorbed into the Egyptian population. But those who held to their old faith and parentage, and were still regarded as a distinct class in the community, must have now become so numerous as to form a considerable part of the population, which was henceforth governed as one kingdom. Their position in the country gave them the command of the Mediterranean coast, and they were the keepers of the wilderness frontier. Moreover, their physical characteristics, in comparison with the slender and low-statured natives of the country, the large amount of wealth in their possession, their strong ancestral claims to high consideration, and, again, their alliance with the expelled invaders, and with the Edomite community in the neighbouring peninsula—must have made them the source of continual anxiety, even to the powerful monarchs who now ruled the destinies of Egypt. Our historian tells us, in the most natural style, of the jealousy and alarm which was thus occasioned; of the cautious acts of oppression which were consequently adopted towards them; and of the indignant resentment which this awakened in the

minds of some of their chiefs and leaders. But all these details are familiar, and need not be enumerated, for we must now pass to the second of the four parts into which our examination is divided.

II. Here we have to consider Dr. Colenso's difficulties in connexion with the Exodus, and with the journeys through the wilderness. And with respect to the first of these two subjects, it will be convenient again to gather into our view the facts, as the sacred historian relates them.

He tells us, then, that, in consequence of the oppression which the new dynasty practised on the Hebrews—and which must first have taken effect on the masses of what may be called the town population around and below Memphis towards the sea, and then, more distressingly, on the hitherto uncontrolled roamers on the borders of the wilderness—the leaders of the people, those whose high rank and station among them would still be recognised by their oppressors, were led to demand their emancipation. We are quite prepared to hear that it was vehemently opposed. For it involved the withdrawal of a considerable amount of wealth from the country; it would break up many households with which the Hebrews had formed alliances; and, moreover, the departure of such a large part of the population would deprive the Egyptians of much effective labour, which left them free for the defence of their country, and for the conduct of the military ex-

peditions which we know they were carrying forward at this time. Accordingly, with a denial of the authority of the Name in which the demand was made, the Egyptian king refused to grant it. "Who," he said, "is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go."

We are then told of the means which were employed to manifest the identity of Him Whom Pharaoh thus denied with the Ruler of the heavens and the earth. The grand series and order of the miracles which introduced the Exodus is related; and I think if we observe their mutual connexion, and their relation to the system of things amidst which they were witnessed, we may discern an "internal evidence," which well deserves our notice at this point, of the truth of this part of the history. For, observe, those miraculous interpositions were not mere random acts of power, manifesting, now and then, and without any method, an occasional interference on the part of superhuman agents. The mighty deeds by which Moses attested his Divine legation, rose gradually one above the other, and showed their Divine origin by embracing the entire sphere of Egyptian life. The material order which had served as the framework of the Church's visible existence was made articulate with the great message whose proclamation was one of the purposes for which it had been instituted: all natural agencies were employed to testify against the cruel oppression to which the Hebrews were subjected. The water, the soil, the

atmosphere, the sky of Egypt, the insect and animal, and the human, life that dwelt in it—were all used in confirmation of the Divine testimony which this suffering people had been called to bear, concerning the benignant character of God, and their fellowship in Him. And thus we are prepared for the spectacle which an attentive consideration of the nature of the position of the Hebrews in the country will enable us to realise with some distinctness, when we next read of the sudden gathering of the people from all parts of their thickly peopled territory to the place of one of their encampments on the outskirts of the desert. In their boats on the canals, and in hastily formed caravans along the roads ; some on camels and asses, others among the wealthier classes in their chariots—we see them crowding towards their place of rendezvous, whole villages and large quarters of the cities of the Delta being utterly deserted, as the gathering company made its way to one of those wide spaces which open out amidst the hills that lie on the western side of the Egyptian sea.

Thus far the narrative agrees perfectly with the known circumstances of Egyptian history in the period to which it is referred. As again it comes in an orderly and natural sequel, after the account already given of the hopes that had been impressed on the people, and of the trust that was committed to their maintenance. Moreover, those who have carefully explored the region in which all these occurrences transpired, affirm that

it accurately accords with the writer's statements, and perfectly satisfies all the conditions required by them. Yet, here again our examiner assures us they cannot be accepted "as true narratives of actual historical matters of fact:" in thus thinking of the circumstances of the Exodus, we are once more under an illusion.

For, first, the writer represents the people as in this manner "going forth **מִשְׁבַּחַת**, *i.e.*, 'armed,' or in 'battle array,' as the word appears to mean in all the other passages where it occurs. . . . But it is inconceivable that these down-trodden, oppressed people should have been allowed by Pharaoh to possess arms. If such a mighty host had had arms in their hands, would they not have risen long ago for their liberty, or at all events would there have been no danger of rising? Besides, the warriors formed a distinct caste in Egypt, as Herodotus tells us, &c.," pp. 48, 49.—Here is one of the proofs of the untrustworthiness of the "story," which we have been just reviewing. Most strange it is, however, that—accepting the correctness of Dr. Colenso's version of the word, which our translation renders "harnessed," and reading it as equivalent to "equipped, or arrayed for battle"—we can only perceive, in our historian's statement that it was thus the Israelites went out of Egypt, an indication of his truthfulness. We remember that for upwards of two centuries, large numbers of the Israelites had occupied, on an exposed frontier, a position which demanded the

bravery and resources of a warlike people to defend it. No others could have occupied that border territory : only strong and valiant men could have there held their ground against the marauders of the wilderness. (You will find in 1 Chron. vii. 21, 22, an account of one of the conflicts to which their position subjected them.) And, therefore, when we read that they not only went up in "battle array," but that arms were in the possession of large numbers of them—and no more than this is stated by the writer or implied : Dr. Colenso's assertion that *all* the adult males are represented as being armed, is one of his usual inaccuracies—we meet with an assertion which is actually required by the previous tenor of the narrative. Our examiner's difficulty in this instance betrays the unreal and imperfect character of his acquaintance with the record on which he is commenting. And this is further shown by his description of the people as being universally "down-trodden and oppressed." For my own part, I get quite another impression concerning them from Pharaoh's words : "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more, and *mightier* than we ;" as well as from the fact that he was forced to "deal wisely" with them ; in other words, that he was obliged to employ stratagem in order to effect their subjugation. The writer nowhere gives us any reason to conclude that they had been *universally* reduced into the condition of bondsmen. Some of them were evidently in possession of high rank, and others, not less plainly, had acquired considerable wealth ; and

for both these reasons their leaders would obtain exemption from the labour which was rendered by the lower classes of the people. The whole tenor of the "story" is utterly inconsistent with that view of the condition of the Israelites which is implied in Dr. Colenso's argument throughout this chapter. Nor can Herodotus give him any help in establishing his point, since this writer represents the state of things which obtained in Egypt at least one thousand years later than the times which now concern us. All we know of the period, whether from the "story," or from other sources, makes it certain that large numbers of the Hebrew people possessed arms, and were accustomed to their use; so that again in this instance the "difficulty," when it is fairly looked at, takes the form of an evidence and an authentication.

This account of the Israelites going out "armed," is, however, only one of the indications which betray the "unhistorical" character of the narrative. We are told that it may be further seen in the statement that "*in one single day* (they are Dr. Colenso's italics) the whole immense population of Israel was instructed to keep the Passover, and actually did keep it. . . . It is true," he adds, "that the story, as it now stands, with the directions about 'taking' the lamb on the tenth day and 'keeping' it till the fourteenth, is perplexing and contradictory." But to what is it "contradictory," and to whom can it be perplexing? The only contradiction which need perplex any straight-

forward reader of this portion of the narrative, is that which he will find between Dr. Colenso's representation of the "story," and the statements actually contained in it. For it is evident that the directions concerning the Passover had been received by Moses, and had by him been delivered to the people, some time before it was actually celebrated on the night of their departure. There is only one word (נָאַת) in the 12th verse, which, as Dr. Colenso notices, appears to oppose this view. But the express requirement (in verses 3 and 6) that the lamb should be kept four days before it was killed, shows that this word is here used prospectively. Instead of "one single day," at least four must have been actually passed in the celebration of the service. And so, in a commentary on the passage which most "examiners of the Pentateuch" would have consulted, Josephus understood it, for he expressly says (*Antiq. II. 14*): "But when God had signified that with one more plague He would compel the Egyptians to let the Hebrews go, He commanded Moses to tell the people that they should have a sacrifice ready, and that they should prepare themselves on the tenth day of the month against the fourteenth. . . . Accordingly, he having made them ready for their departure . . . when the fourteenth day was come, they offered the sacrifice and purified their houses, &c."

Here, again, instead of "contradictions and impossibilities," we can see in the narrative nothing but the natural order and consistency, which show its truth-

fulness. And the same thing may be affirmed of the next difficulty, which, you will observe, Dr. Colenso has brought forward in this same chapter where we find his comments on this Passover. It was suggested to him by the statement (Exod. iii. 22 ; xi. 2 ; xii. 35) "that every woman was to borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourned in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment." He tells us, pp. 56, 59, that "the supposition of their borrowing in this way, even if they lived in a city, involves prodigious difficulties ; and that these would be enormously increased" if they were scattered over any extent of country. Here you will be pleased to remark that Dr. Colenso does not advance the old difficulty which has been dwelt on so often as to the nature of this "borrowing." The arguments brought forward by Hengstenberg, and strongly confirmed by Kurtz, have probably convinced him that the word **לֹאשׁ** means in this, as in other places, "to ask," or "to demand ;" and that when it is said that in consequence of their request, or their demand, being granted, they "spoiled (**לֹאשׁ**) the Egyptians," the author "meant to lay stress upon the fact that constraint had been exerted by them, and that Israel marched away, 'laden with, as it were, the booty of their powerful foes, as a sign of the victory which they, in their weakness, had gained through the 'omnipotence of God.'" It is not then the "demand" itself, but the hurried manner in which it was made (p. 57), and because, "when suddenly summoned to

depart they hastened, at a moment's notice, to 'borrow' in all directions from the Egyptians"—which constitutes the difficulty in this instance. But here again, the difficulty is one which our examiner has himself created. There is no sign of any such haste and hurry in the narrative. One of the three passages which relate to the proceeding in question (Exod. xi. 2), appears to have escaped Dr. Colenso's notice; and this proves decisively that, in prospect of their departure, the Hebrews had been urging their demands for some time before the last plague was inflicted upon Egypt. They might well urge them, for the obvious reason that, to leave the country as they had the prospect of doing, would otherwise entail upon them considerable loss. All their immoveable property would then have fallen into the hands of the Egyptians without any equivalent being received by them. They had, therefore, long before their departure, insisted upon what was plainly an equitable claim, though it was not satisfied, until, through the consternation occasioned by the last plague, constraint was laid on their oppressors, and, (as the passage, Exod. xii. 36, literally means), the Egyptians complied with, or satisfied, their (just) requirements.

Thus does the narrative again vindicate its consistency when it really is "examined."—But, says Dr. Colenso, and this is the last of his difficulties which needs to be considered at this point—"here we have this vast body of people of all ages summoned to

start, according to the story, at a moment's notice, and actually starting, together with all their multitudinous flocks and herds, which must have spread out over a district as large as a good-sized English county," p. 61. How could this be? he asks us. And then he relates an incident in his Natal experience, "remembering which," he does not "hesitate to declare this statement to be utterly incredible and impossible." But whose statement is it? Certainly not that of the inspired writer. We have already seen that, instead of representing them as starting "at a moment's notice," he manifestly intimates the very contrary, and in various ways suggests the fact, that they were for some time, probably for weeks, engaged in preparations for their journey. Moreover, he tells us not less expressly, and in more ways than one, that when the journey began it was in the outset deliberately prosecuted. For he first distinctly intimates that they remained for a while at Rameses, to collect the necessities likely to be required by them, and to receive the valuables which they had justly claimed in compensation for the property they had left behind. And afterwards, reviewing their progress as far as Elim, he states (comp. Numb. xxxiii. 3, and Exod. xvi. 1), that, when they arrived there, an entire month had elapsed since they started. We here find that "reference to the 'days of rest,'" as well as to the "marching days," of which Dr. Colenso denies the existence in the history. "There would surely have been some reference to

them," he says (p. 63), "if they really occurred." No; not "surely :" any reference to them might have been omitted. Here, however, we actually find it, in the express statement, that the journey as far as Elim had occupied an entire month. Of this period, one week at most was needed for their marchings and encampments on the east side of the Red Sea ; so that, on the most unfavourable computation, we have no less than three weeks assigned by the historian, instead of the three days or thereabouts insisted on by his "examiner" for the prosecution of this part of their journey.

Now, I think we may at length proceed undisturbed by any, at all events, of *these* difficulties, in our conviction that the history thus far is trustworthy, and that it does—Dr. Colenso notwithstanding—give us "true narratives of actual historical matters of fact." And here I will ask you to indulge me with your attention to the following extracts from my *Scripture Lands in connexion with their history*, which may give us some further help in our examination of this part of it ?—

" The Hebrew people were spread over Egypt to positions considerably south of their main settlement in Goshen, and some of them may have been located on those broad plains opposite Memphis, where there are still so many traditional memorials of them. Rameses, identified with Hieropolis, was their rendezvous ; and to this point the labourers on the above ground, and those toiling further to the south, may have gone through the Wady Ramlieh, direct east of Memphis, and then turned off north-east by Jebel Reibun, or have still continued

in an easterly direction by Wady Tawârik to the Red Sea. Or Jebel Reibun may have been the point of meeting, both for the companies in Goshen and those nearer Memphis. In the outset, and before the passage of the Red Sea, the separate companies must, at all events, have marched along different roads to their point of rendezvous; and hence may be reconciled traditions and arguments which fix on so many distinct paths as those which were taken by the emancipated captives. . . . After attentively considering the various theories that have been formed respecting the passage of the Red Sea, my own conclusion is, that it was made somewhere opposite the opening of the Wady Tarâwik, where the sea is *now* about seven miles broad. This position perfectly satisfies all the conditions of this stupendous miracle, for such—judging from the impressions left by it (Josh. ii. 9, 10; Ps. cxi. 9)—it must have been, and something very different from passing over a ford, as it has sometimes been represented. *Nothing, however, can be more futile than to judge of the circumstances of the miracle from the present appearance of the coast and of the gulf:* the shore-line has changed; still more, the bed of the sea, which is plainly seen through the clear, translucent water, is covered with a jagged coral surface, over which, at any point, it is inconceivable that any company can have passed. *Changes must have occurred since the passage, which have obliterated all traces of the state and aspect of the scene of it at that time.* ‘On our left, at the mouth of the Wady Tawârik, was ‘Migdol’ (Atâkah); before us ‘the sea;’ on the right, in the defiles between the ranges of ‘Jebel Deraj,’ ‘Pihahiroth’ (openings of the caverns); and probably somewhere near here was ‘Baal Zephon,’ in the form of a temple dedicated to Typhon. . . . We ascended the foremost projection of Ras Atâkah. There we had the two conjectured scenes of the passage in view at once, and just underneath is the eight-fathom passage which Laborde speaks of. . . . It is true, as Stanley says, that ‘the framework’ of the miracle wrought here is not majestic, but it accords with the narrative, and perfectly satisfies all its conditions.’’—*Scripture Lands, &c., pp. 49, 53, 54.*

We now follow the emancipated people in their journey through the wilderness. The account of their progress during the first thirty or thirty-five days, is given in such detail, that every stage of it can be marked and followed, until they reached the plain of Sinai, and encamped before the sacred mount, which there rose in its lonely majesty, grandly towering before them. There is greater difficulty in tracing the order of their marchings after their departure from this place. But, comparing the account in Num. xxxiii. of their “goings out, which Moses wrote by the commandment of Jehovah,” with the details elsewhere given—it can be very nearly, if not exactly, ascertained. And taking the result of this comparison, and following them by means of it to the end of their “wanderings,” we find a coincidence which is absolutely perfect between the details of the narrative, and the respective localities in the peninsula to which they are assigned. Those stages of their journey, where the people are represented as suffering and exhausted in their enterprise, and consequently as desirous to abandon it, are even now recognised as just the distressing stages in a route which, through a considerable part of it, would not entail upon them excessive fatigue, or involve them in unbearable privations. When the history alludes to supernatural help, it represents the people as being then in a position where such help would evidently be required for such a multitude. As, again, it was not less evidently unneeded, in those stages where the historian’s silence on the subject implies it was

not given. You know that I am here speaking from personal knowledge of the ground in question. With the sacred narrative in constant view at each stage through which the people are conducted in it, I have traversed the whole of the peninsula, and my purpose requires me to ask for your attention at this point to the results of this detailed comparison of the history itself with the nature and peculiarities of the ground on which it was transacted.

Their journey began in the desert portion of their settlement, which must already have been familiar to many among them, the shepherds and hunters of the company, in their wanderings and adventures.

“ Further on, however, and for three days after passing the wells in the spot where they emerged upon the Asian shore, they came on one of the most tedious and depressing stages of their journey through the peninsula. Here they had a glimpse of the arid desert regions, in the line of which the peninsula is situated. Sand-storms were of common occurrence ; nor was there any water, though on the frequent mounds which they here met with they found a considerable amount of vegetation, on which their flocks and herds found sufficient, if not abundant, pasture.⁹ This ‘three days in the wilderness,’

⁹ “ From Ayoun Mousa to Wady Sudr we had, fortunately, a northerly wind, or we should have been troubled with sand, as nearly all travellers say they were in this part of the journey. We were surprised at the large amount of vegetation in this most unpromising part of the desert. For more than two miles our course lay through mounds, about nine feet high, which were almost covered with rich green tufts. . . . Next day we had disagreeable experience of a sand-storm, through which we saw a large flock of gazelles. We passed numerous mounds of the same character, and rested near a sanded-up fountain, which our Sheikh said is called Howara, and over which stand two luxuriant clumps of palms.”— *Extract from Journal.*

even as far as the ‘Bitter Waters,’ soon and very naturally exhausted the strength and spirits with which the people had started from their first encampment and landing-place. At Marah, however, they were encouraged by seeing the familiar palm; and soon, in a few hours more, they turned into a broad refreshing wady, with clear, sweet water flowing beneath the roots of its numerous trees. The high, massive promontory, just in front of them on the south, forbade their continued advance along the shore; nor would they be reluctant to ascend the broad and shady path, with its even rich pasturage, that lay before them. Now, for two days, their journey lay in a wooded, and well-watered, and even romantic country. In most impressive contrast with the dreary flatness of Egypt, the mountain scenery of the peninsula here burst on them, until, advancing along a broad pathway, as in a wide street, of which the house-doors and windows had been suddenly removed, they found themselves at its entrance upon that broad open space, stretching a mile and a half in front of them, which is identified as the place of their ‘encampment by the Red Sea.’

“Here, in this grand and beautiful scene, the ignoble and degraded masses of the people began to experience some of that influence of the scenery, so strongly contrasted as it is with the flat monotony of the Delta plains, which appears to have been one of the most important agencies in their mental culture and elevation. This influence continued, surrounding and impressing them during their journey through their next stage from this station; but they now lost the refreshment, the shade and water which for the last two days had supported them in their severe fatigues. In thus leading them forward Moses disclosed his firmness, and the fidelity with which he discharged the office he had been called to undertake. He knew the country, the dangers of the pass by the double headland which was lying before them on the south, and then the sufferings they would encounter on the wide plain of Murkhâh, across which they must accomplish a shadeless march of twelve miles, on to the great rocks of the southern

side of that weary land, where only, in that dreary, desolate region, they would find any shadow from the heat. He led them on, however; and here in this scene of special emergency, the hand of their Divine Guide was specially outstretched to supply them with those necessaries, which, on the two previous days, they found among the natural resources of the comparatively pleasant, refreshing country through which their road then had led them. When they emerged from this plain, they went forward through rugged and narrow passes, with high walls of dark, basaltic rock, towering over them on either side. Sometimes their road led them up through intricate, abrupt, and steep ascents, where they found no verdure, and only here and there, in the recesses of the rocky openings and passages, shrub-tufts and thin vegetation, which would hardly furnish their cattle with the scantiest supplies of nourishment. Somewhere, in this dreary and barren, and yet sternly sublime, region, Dophkah and Alush are situated; and, on a forced march, there are just two days' journeys intervening between their late 'encampment by the Red Sea,' and the position with which, as we shall see, Rephidim must be identified.

"No mention is made by the historian of any special assistance afforded to them in this place; nor, in fact, notwithstanding its iron ruggedness and arid destitution, was any miraculous help needed by them at this stage of their progress; for now, at length, they had reached the neighbourhood of large Egyptian settlements. Here they would meet caravans of traders carrying provisions to the workmen and settlers in the colony near the copper-mines of Sûrâbit el Khâdim. Almost midway in their progress is Wady Maghârah, where they would see on tablets high up on the rocky faces of the mountain, and which were even then ancient witnesses of the tyrannical superstition of the people from whom they had just separated. Within a few hours thence were the mines, having a considerable Egyptian population around them, where foraging parties, detached from the main body, could obtain supplies, that might also be abundantly furnished by the travelling caravans of traders and Bedouins, whom they could hardly fail to meet

with in the neighbourhood of such an important settlement.¹⁰

“ When, however, they approached Rephidim, all those resources which had supplied their needs throughout their journey between this place and the Wilderness of Sin began to fail ; and, where they were encamped under the rocks, which now rose high on either side of their road, ‘ there was no water for the people to drink.’ The wells of Paran were yet nearly a day’s march distant ; and here, accordingly, in their need, a supply was miraculously furnished to them.

“ In this place, as the memorial names, Massah (temptation) and Meribah (strife), left on it denoted, they failed in that trust which their recent experience should have taught and encouraged them to exercise. The trials, however, were indeed severe. Their leader, whom they knew to be familiar with the country, had encouraged them in their toils and privations, after they left Elim and the encampment before the Red Sea, by the prospect of the wells, and palm-groves, and rich pastures of Paran—that beautiful oasis of the wilderness. And now, while still in the mountainous tract which opens on it, they found this rich garden territory jealously guarded by warlike tribes, against whom they had to make good their passage by force of arms. This, however, they effected ; they ‘ discomfited Amalek with the edge of the sword ;’ but instead of resting in

¹⁰ There is unquestionable evidence that this part of the desert was largely peopled. The mines Sûrâbit el Khâdim ; those of which Dr. Wilson discovered traces on Jebel Nasb (*Lands of the Bible*, vol. i. 187) ; the tablets and caves in Wady Maghârah—all show that, before and after the exodus, there was a considerable settlement at this place. (In the Maghârah tablets we saw the cartouche of Suphis, the builder of the great pyramid ; and on the stones at Sûrâbit el Khâdim there are those of kings of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties). The most distant of these places is within three hours (ten miles) of Wady Mokattein, the chief inscriptions in which must, on any hypothesis, have been the work of residents in the valley, not of casual passers-by, since many of them are in positions which could only be reached by appliances and aids which mere travellers could not employ.

his territory, as they might have expected, and as they desired, they passed through it, after a brief stay of at most a few days. . . .

“ . . . There was no opportunity, however, for any lengthened pause. This was the very garden of the peninsula; and their stay there, as if to occupy it, would have brought on them all the scattered tribes of the Bedouins, and these probably would have come aided and reinforced by the Egyptians in the neighbourhood. Their occupation of the territory would have been a reason for war such as the Hebrews were not then prepared to encounter. On, therefore, they went, now through rock-scenery of naked, barren grandeur; no trees, no pasturage, or wells; nothing but abrupt and rugged eminences of chalk, and limestone, and granite—all in the most entire contrast with the recent site of the encampment; until, after a long day’s march onwards, in a direct line through this cold, sterile desolation, they reached the open wady of Sebayeh, and there encamped—the high pyramidal mass of Sinai on the western side, lonely and stern, towering above them.

“ Here they found water, and on the gentle slopes which surround the valley, their flocks and herds were supplied with pasturage. The manna, also, was still continued in daily supplies to them. In the neighbouring wadys opening on this ample ground, which furnished the central site of the encampment, and which was doubtless the place of the great assemblages of the people, there were large and abundant spaces, for many families of the tribes whose stations were on the north-east and south-west sides of the congregation. Nor were they exposed in any direction to secret, sinister attacks from the wandering tribes around those parts, as they had been in the narrower valleys and passes through which they had been journeying; as, again, there was nothing in the nature of their station to awaken any jealousy against them while they occupied it. On the contrary, their presence here would rather be welcomed by their late adversaries, with whom they might now carry on negotiations, exchanging the solid wealth they had brought from Egypt for the supplies which the resources of the desert tribes enabled them to furnish to the encampment.

Here, accordingly, they settled in front of the great mountain, which was visible from every point of the central ground, and conspicuous in its sublimity and altitude above all surrounding eminences, not one of them in its neighbourhood approaching, or even comparing with it in grandeur. . . . In preparing the tabernacle and the instruments of their worship, the large accumulation of their wealth was here available, and for many months their artists and skilled workmen resumed the labours of their craft. The encampment was busied with many of the occupations that had employed them in their house of bondage ; detachments were sent to trade with the neighbouring tribes for beams of the acacia that grew around their settlements, and for skins of the wild animals which their hunters had captured. Some of the people would retrace their steps to the mining districts, which they had lately passed, and where they would procure many needful materials for the new structures they were uprearing. . . .¹¹

“At length, in the early spring of the year after they left Egypt, the tabernacle was set up, in sign and token that their organisation as one of the kingdoms was completed. As they went towards the holy place, the smoke that daily ascended from the altar in front of it, rose in view of the sacred summit now so solemn and venerable in their regards. But, in a few days they gazed on Mount Sinai for the last time ; for they were commanded to resume their march, and, in long and now well-ordered line, they started afresh on a journey which in another month, at most, should have ended by their taking possession of the land which had been promised to them.

¹¹ “The coarser, heavier materials of the tabernacle, such as they had not brought with them from Egypt, were easily procured from the Egyptian settlements at the mines, from which they were only at most three days’ journey distant. The acacia (*shittim*) wood abounded in the neighbourhood of the encampment ; and the tachash, the skins of which were so largely used, is identified with some of the antelope species, which are now constantly met with in the peninsula, and which, it is said, are still known in Eastern Africa under almost the same name.”—Comp. *Kitto’s Bib. Cyc.*, vol. I, p. 277.

"From the summits of hills in the neighbourhood of Sinai, the whole course of the ground they had to traverse was plainly visible. Every winding and eminence upon it was distinctly seen, on to the broad belt of sand that lies at the foot of the supporting mountain-wall of the highlands of the peninsula. They saw clearly, therefore, that, as they went over that bare and arid surface, some of the trials would be again encountered under which they had sunk in the three days while they were in Etham, and afterwards during their passage through the Wilderness of Sin. Still the difficulties they actually experienced were greater even than they could have expected; and, indeed, had those three thousand who were slain as the most factious of the host been yet among them, and had they still continued in their previous undisciplined, uninstructed state, they must have been overcome by those discouragements of the way which they there encountered. For now, after twelve months' rest and refreshment in the Sinai vale, where they had found competent supplies for their cattle and for themselves, their paths lay amongst the most desolate and barren stages of the journey across the broad sandy region which separates the cluster of the Sinaitic hills from the great ranges of the Tih.¹² Here and there they would find sufficient, if not ample, pasturage for their flocks. In the most unlikely turns along their intricate pathway they would come on plots

¹² "We have no distinct notices of the exact direction taken by the people in their march from Sinai. They went on some way northward, and they are shortly found at the head of the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. They must therefore have crossed the Tih range, and they would naturally prefer the passes on the east.

"This makes it probable that they went on the route which is now usually taken by travellers from the Sinai Convent to Akabah; and Robinson identifies the Ain Huderal, in his line of march, with Hazcroth. Most travellers find this the most toilsome part of their journey in the peninsula; and this was our experience during the two days in which we went from Sinai to the pass El Mureikeh, which is the central pass upwards from the lower part of the peninsula to the highlands beyond the Tih."

of desert vegetation, on garden-like spaces, that were covered with shrubs and herbage, and fertilised by the winter torrents, which would surprise them by their marvellous profusion, day after day, when the pause of their encampment was signalled. For themselves, however, there was no food. Here they could no longer procure the corn which they might easily have obtained from Egypt while they were at Sinai, since their wealth gave them the means of purchasing it, and there were agents easily found who would convey it. Then, the pasturage which the flocks and herds obtained was so scanty as barely to supply them with milk for their infant children. The butter and cheese which they could procure from the wandering tribes in the valleys around Sinai, or make for themselves, could no longer be obtained; and they pined and fainted for stronger food than the manna, especially under the fatigue of crossing the stupendous pass over the mountain range which now was close before them.

“ What they should have done at this time was to press energetically forward; and then, in a few days, they would have had food and resources of all kinds on the ground south of the patriarchal settlement; where in fact they afterwards found it for upwards of thirty-eight years. But this effort they would not make. Here, accordingly, on three occasions in this stage of the journey, their failure of trust is again conspicuously noted, with one of the causes that occasioned it, in the lack of food. And here it is that we read how, in punishment for their sloth and ignoble weakness, the food they lusted after was miraculously furnished, in quantities inviting to excesses that slew the mightiest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.

“ In this manner they dug again for themselves graves of lust and of transgression. Those graves lie somewhere near the western side of the great Tih range, which now, at length, taught and strengthened by their severe discipline, the people girded themselves up to pass.¹² In respect of physical effort

¹² “ Dr. Stewart, *Tent and Khan*, pp. 96, 159, 160; gives

and enterprise, this was incomparably more difficult than anything they had undertaken. Along steep and rugged paths, upon the edge of deep ravines, and on narrow ledges by the sides of the stupendous hills, where the beasts moved on with difficulty in single file—they, at length, reached the head of the Elanitic Gulf; and there, under the palms of that beautiful oasis of the desert, where the peninsula borders close on the vast Arabian wilderness, they refreshed themselves after their prodigious toil and excitement from the perils which they had just undergone, and made their preparations for the effort of the few remaining days, which took them on to Kadesh. Near the encampment they found mercantile stations; and here, too, their friendly relations with the Midianites in the neighbourhood procured for them some of the necessaries required in the prosecution of their journey.

“It was in about eighteen months from the time when they started from Egypt that we next find them advancing up the broad sandy desert, that stretches its terrific length from the head of the Elanitic Gulf to the Dead Sea, and settling, after about three days’ journey northward, at their encampment in Kadesh. . . . This station was at the foot of that range which extends, in confused and broken eminences, all along the western side of the long path they had just traversed. . . . They would find water there, and vegetation, shrubs, and trees—the nubk, the acacia, probably the palm—in equal abundance with that which they had found sufficient, through all seasons of the year, in the neighbourhood of Sinai. With the Edomites, in the blue mountain valleys which fronted them on the east, they were on friendly terms; and from them they could procure corn sufficient for their needs. From this place, then, they sent up into the highland country an adventurous company of spies, or explorers, for the purpose of ascertaining the most

an interesting account of numerous cairns, or stone mounds, which he found in this direction, two days’ journey from the convent, and which, as he reports, are known among the Bedouins as *Turbet el Yahoud*, ‘the Graves of the Jews.’”

practicable line of access into the promised territory ; and, for forty days, they looked wistfully for the return of these messengers, for they were anxious to move out of the oppressive, stifling heat of the Arabah, on to the healthier as well as more abundant region which was there above them, and which they already regarded as their own possession.

“These were the circumstances, and this must have been the state of mind, in which they awaited the return of the commissioned twelve, who were deputed as their forerunners. Their alarm and disappointment, when these men brought back such a discouraging report, especially in respect of the prowess of the inhabitants, may be illustrated by their own superiority, in respect of personal strength, to the Egyptians. Such as they were in comparison with the slender, low-statured, and debilitated occupants of the Nile valley, the Hebrews had expected to find themselves in relation to the possessors of the land, whom they could then have easily displaced. They had thought of an immediate conquest over races to whom they were as much superior as to their keepers in the house of bondage.¹⁴ . . . They were, therefore, naturally overcome by consternation and despair when the facts were laid before them. . . . ‘Would it not be better,’ they now asked, ‘to return into Egypt?’ And then was uttered the threatening which spurred them to that wild rush, through the hill passes above them, which was so disastrously repulsed, and which compelled them to ascend in the only course now before them, through one of the gentler openings farther south, on to that wide and ample territory south of the patriarchal ground, where at length we reach the scene of their history during this stage of it, for here thirty-eight of the forty years of what is known as their wanderings were passed. . . .

¹⁴ Judging from the mummies, the figures of the ancient Egyptians were slight, and their stature averaged about five and a half feet. . . . The contrast between them and the robust descendants of the giant settlers in Hebron would naturally strike the people with surprise and alarm, as described in Numb. xiii. 28.

“.... This vast and open territory was marked by frequent tracts of verdure and fruitfulness, where the long-practised agricultural skill of the Hebrews might be put into profitable activity. Even in the heart and centre of it, and under the languid and unskilful operations of the wandering tribes whom they dispossessed, they found corn and barley growing in considerable quantities; while the spaces covered with desert vegetation would be a continual surprise to them, as they moved over the surface of the country, between its mountain boundaries and the sandy desert on the west towards Egypt. They would carefully avoid settling for any time on this side of their new territory, both on account of its barrenness, and to escape contention with the armed companies moving to and fro between the land of their late captivity and Palestine. On this line they might, however, communicate with the caravans for purposes of merchandise; and as a granary, Egypt was within their reach. Probably, extensive communities were then occupying some of the oases of the country, where they frequently found scenes of exquisite beauty, as well as abundant means of pasturage and sustenance. High mountains were in view from every part of it, and over its general surface there was an aspect of massive grandeur and desolate sublimity, that contrasted most favourably with the stations where their ancestors, the patriarchs, had settled.¹⁵

¹⁵ We crossed this part of the peninsula by Nukhl and Beersheba. The following extracts from my journal will convey some impression of its appearance. “Every step of our journey to-day (April 6th, the second day after crossing the Tih) has shown how abundant water was at one time here. . . . Our course has almost entirely lain amongst the beds of ancient torrents. . . . We met with continuous vegetation. The turfa was abundant, but it does not bear manna here.—April 9th. Again came on extensive spaces covered with vegetation. Some acres, about a mile from Nukhl, are under field cultivation. In fact, a pure desert, *i.e.*, a sandy or stony surface without vegetation, has hitherto been the exception.—April 10th. Our camping ground to-night is on the borders of a wady as fruitful and picturesque as Ghurmdel or Fairâن; grain is

"In its features and resources, and again in its relative position with respect to the adjacent kingdoms, the region was well adapted for the training of that generation which was first to enter on the place of the Hebrews as one amongst the nations of the earth. There was freedom for the masses from corrupting influences and from oppression, while the princes and elders had opportunities, by means of the caravans which passed on either side of them, to maintain the permanent advantages they had acquired. Their position, in fact, combined the advantages of both the previous positions of the people on the patriarchal territory and in Egypt. Amidst these circumstances Moses saw another generation rising up, under the strengthening discipline of their new life, free from the ignoble features that were indelibly branded on their parents' soul, and under the purifying and elevating influence of the polity and worship that were now observed under his superintendence.

"For it was another generation that came down through one of the wadys in the west of the Arabah, from the high table-lands of Paran into the broad wilderness highway that lay outstretched, between the hills they were descending, and the purple mountains of Edom before them on the east. They could not have been ignorant of its sterility and arid desolation, for it was visible to them whenever they approached its mountain boundary on that side of their wide territory. Yet here again the old rebellious, mistrustful spirit manifested itself, on the failure of the waters in their former encampment at Kadesh. The hopes of Moses, that he might yet see the success of

growing on it and birds are singing; and one might imagine oneself at home, in the country, about the middle of May.—April 13th. Soon after starting this morning we came upon patches of ground under cultivation, and growing barley and oats; and further on we found extensive field enclosures. . . . Reached Berein and rested under the first group of trees we have seen since leaving the garden at Sinai. The whole country (around Eboda) was at one time evidently under cultivation. . . . There were wide grassy swards and ploughed fields just before we reached this wady where we are now encamped."

the enterprise for which he had lived and toiled, were again discouraged; and he must also have been conscious of much anxiety on account of their purpose to make their way up the Ghor through the Edom provinces to the eastern side of Jordan. Their request to advance in that direction, however, was refused. The king of Edom naturally enough forbade the march of such a formidable host through his mountain territory, and past the neighbourhood of settlements and cities that were even then wealthy with the stores of the great commerce which was being carried forward by the land caravans across the Arabah desert, and by the shipping in the Gulf of Elah. This refusal saved the Israelites from a temptation which Moses, not less than the king of Edom, must have dreaded, since it might have led them to stop short of the true goal of their enterprise, and to settle themselves in the attractive country to which they might even suppose they could make out ancestral claims. Under the king's prohibition, however, they were helpless; for an attempt to force a passage up those mountains, occupied and protected by hostile troops, would have been infatuation.

"We now, therefore, see them compelled, in one of the severest trials of their fortitude, to return on a southward march down the Arabah, with the purpose of taking the route bordering upon the great wilderness on the other side of the Seir mountains, that so they might reach the provinces on the east of the Jordan. This circuitous and dangerous path was, however, the only one open to them, and so they girded themselves up in mind and body to attempt it. . . .

"They went forward upon the long journey of more than sixty miles, which yet lay between them and the head of the eastern Red Sea Gulf; for this heated barren valley was not a scene to tarry in longer than needful. . . . But before them were the palm-groves of Elah, under whose green shades their ancestors had stopped and refreshed themselves thirty-eight years before, in a transient revival of their life beside the Nile. As soon as they arrived at that resting-place they replenished their stores from the commercial dépôts they found there, and from the encampments of the friendly Midianites; and then

they ascended the winding mountain-path which led up to the higher ground bordering on the great desert, that stretched far beyond them on the east, and they went along the already well-trodden route of the caravans which, for centuries past, had conveyed to Damascus and the north of Syria the merchandise of Egypt and of Ethiopia.

“ Their relations with Edom compelled them to keep a line of march on the very outskirts of the great sandy shadeless waste, stretching far on to the Persian Gulf, which was even more terrible than the desert highway they had just left, beyond the mountains that now stood low, compared with their elevation as they had before been seen on the west.¹⁶ So the soul of the people ‘was here naturally much discouraged, because of the way.’ In truth, their circumstances at this time were more trying, and even apparently more desperate, than any their ancestors had ever encountered in their marchings. One week’s earnest endeavour might, indeed, have carried them to the end of their embarrassment; and, as was afterwards shown, there were amongst them many who were capable of such an effort, and who earnestly expostulated with the feebler, the ignoble, and rebellious spirits who impeded them so much by their complaints. They, for failing in that effort, were severely punished. The ‘fiery serpents’ of this region added new horrors to their sufferings from heat, and fatigue, and drought. This severe visitation, however, like former ones, purified the camp of its pests and troublers; for the efficacy of the cure provided for it was discriminative, so that it took effect only on those who were willing to go forward on their remaining path cordially and with valiant trust. For the rest, the faithless and the ignoble, they were left in their desert graves; and another mound of death was raised in awful testimony of

¹⁶ The road taken by the people coincided with the present Haj route from Damascus to Mecca, and the towns and villages situated in it now supply the pilgrim caravans, as the Edomites supplied the marching Hebrews; selling to them water and their field produce as it was required. Deut. ii. 28, 29.

their guilty unfaithfulness in the vocation with which they had been called.

“ In a very few days after this last visitation, they were on those same open downs melting away in the great desert, over which they had wished to make a direct march, when they requested a passage through the territories of the king of Edom. His country, which they passed on the east of it, reminded them of the best parts of the Paran uplands, whose familiar heights they could now discern in some of the prospects that now opened before them on the south-west. There were in view the well-known hills, under whose shades the lives of all, save three of them, had been passed. The same aspect of the country was continued in the possessions of the friendly tribe of Moab, on the borders of whose territory they paused to refresh and recruit their forces. Here the grey hills on the other side of Jordan were distinctly visible, and just in front of them they could look on the eastern boundaries of the Land of the Patriarchs. They took up their position at the head of the valley which gives its name, Arnon, to the springs that come through a broad cleft in the north-east coast of the Dead Sea, leaving beyond them, on the other side of the wildly beautiful and richly wooded ravine, on the south of which they were encamped, a country even more picturesque and fruitful than any they had seen since they left their resting-place at Akabah.”

Here their long discipline, in preparation for the conquest and occupation of the land that had been promised to them, ended.—And now, reviewing the account which you see thus illustrated, step by step, by means of an inspection of the ground over which the historian carries us,—the narrative itself, be it observed, being obtained by means of a searching comparison between two separated portions of his record,—you see how truly it may be affirmed that the coincidence is

absolutely perfect between the circumstances of his history and the respective localities in the peninsula to which he has assigned them. The topographical details given by him are reflected, with most accurate precision, in the present aspect of the country ; and—as you observed I intimated in passing—traces of an earlier condition of greater fertility and cultivation continually deepen in the traveller's mind this sense of an absolutely perfect conformity between the narrative and the ground and framework of its occurrence. Hence the first tests by which we naturally examine our writer's trustworthiness are satisfied. And, as I have before reminded you, the interior agreements and the “undesigned coincidences,” between separated parts of each book of his history, and again between each book in its entireness, and the remaining four, are not less remarkable than the accuracy of its exterior relation.¹⁷ Are we not, then, entitled to say that, so far, the Pentateuch justifies the account which was given of it when it was put into our hands, under such high sanction and authority ? Surely we may here conclude that, if ever authentic history was written, these books of Moses contain the record of historical circumstances as real as any that ever occurred on earth, and that have been transacted in the history of men.

Innumerable students, after many years of unfettered as well as of trustful and reverent inquiry into the subject, have deliberately come to this conclusion.

¹⁷ See Appendix.

Yet here, in this part of the “story” especially, Dr. Colenso finds “a series of manifest contradictions and inconsistencies, which leave us, it would seem, no alternative but to conclude that main portions of the story of the Exodus, though based probably on some real historical foundation, yet are certainly not to be regarded as historically true. It has been written”—*i. e.* it has been compiled or edited—“from the ancient legends of the people, though with no more consciousness of doing wrong, or of practising historical deception, than Homer had, or any of the early Roman annalists.”—Pp. xi, xvii.

For, first, as one main reason for this conclusion, Dr. Colenso asks, How it is possible to account for the sustenance of such an immense multitude, with their cattle and herds, in a country such as the peninsula is described, both by modern travellers and by Scripture, as being, and this during a period of forty years? Then (pp. 65–78) he collects, and comments upon, the reports of observers, who speak of its “bare and barren plains of sands,” of its “entire desolation,” of its “extreme scarcity of water,” and of its lack “of anything that can properly be called soil.” And he says, “It cannot be pretended that the state of the country through which the people travelled has undergone any material change from that time to this. It is described as being then what it is now, a ‘desert land,’ a ‘waste, howling wilderness.’” On this difficulty he has expended his chief force in his longest and most elaborate chapter,

replying, at considerable length, and in a manner which I shall soon notice, to the considerations which Drs. Stanley and Kalisch have brought forward in order to mitigate, if not remove, it.

Now that the above quotations describe with accuracy some parts of the peninsula is evident from the history itself, and this fact appears plainly in what I may call the illustrated version of it, which I have just placed before you. Indeed, it is in connexion with such portions of his narrative that we observe an indication of the sacred writer's accuracy and truthfulness, since it is just where he is following the people through these stages of their journey that, as I before said, he represents them as distressed and exhausted by their enterprise, and consequently desirous to abandon it. But it is not less certain that to a very considerable — nay, to by far the larger — part of the ground in question, the phrases which Dr. Colenso has collected are wholly inappropriate. “Bare and barren plains,” “entire desolation,” &c., are descriptions ridiculously unsuitable to immense portions of the 18,000 square miles which are comprised in the surface of this country, and especially so to that portion in which at least thirty-eight of the forty years of the wanderings were passed. In the configuration and levels of its surfaces, and, indeed, in all its physical characteristics, the peninsula includes regions of the most varied character. Its soil, and climate, and its resources, are singularly diversified. In some parts no waste

places can exceed its arid, dreary barrenness ; in others it is fertile, abundantly watered, and romantic in the beauty, and even magnificence, of its prospects. On its lower grounds, indeed, the heat is terribly oppressive, but among the mountains around Sinai, and upon the Paran highlands, you breathe an air so stimulating and invigorating, that it is, in fact, at the present time, the yearly resort of numerous invalids, who would be loath to exchange the scenes of their "desert tour" for the most favourite regions in Switzerland, or the Tyrol. You must have gathered thus much from my own description ; and here let me, in addition, quote a few sentences from the Journal of Miss Martineau, who may well be regarded as an unexceptionable witness in this cause.

"Here," (*i.e.* on the same ground which Dr. Colenso, commenting on Stanley's words, describes as "bare and barren plains of sand") "I came upon a clump of palms . . . in the midst of this clump was a well ; and along the deep water-course, for a considerable distance, tamarisks, acacias, and palmis, were scattered and clumped. . . . Soon after remounting we came upon a string of muddy pools, where our camels drank. *Everywhere in the desert we were surprised by the number of water-courses, and the traces of torrents.* . . . It is curious that while no rain falls in the almost parallel and not distant Nile valley, there should be abundant rain in this peninsula, usually in December and January. We saw a good many pigeons (comp. *Colenso*, p. 125), and a few other birds ;¹⁸ and under almost every bush

¹⁸ I find this entry in my own Journal. April 4th, (the day of crossing the Tih) "Saw a flight of birds, thousands in number . . . which at last vanished in the distance, like a cloud."

were the holes of the little jerboas. . . . Our place of encampment this (*i.e.* the next) evening was very charming. The scenery the next morning was transporting." . . . Then, after leaving Sinai, and while on one of the most trying portions of the journey, she writes, "But we turned up among granite mountains again, and found ourselves in a gorge, compared with whose summits Sinai and Horeb appeared almost insignificant. Every winding disclosed something finer than we had yet met with; and at last we came upon a scene to which we remembered no parallel. We all knew Switzerland, and we all agreed that not even there had we seen anything so magnificent as this Wadée-el-Ain, the Valley of the Spring. . . . Presently we proceeded more slowly still, most willingly, for we felt we could hardly linger too long. As we turned into Wady Weteer we came upon a scene which might almost be called verdant. The asphodel and other plants which grew on perches, and in crevices of the red rock, were of the liveliest green, while tamarisks spread their sprawling growth on all nooks and on many platforms. Not only did the camels stop to crop these tamarisks, their drivers were seen at every bush and in the midst of every tree, gathering arms and laps-full of twigs for their beasts."—Her route lay along the northern part of the Paran highlands, on which, as I have reminded you, the people spent at least thirty-eight of their forty years, and she gives an account of this portion which will remind you of extracts from my own Journal in relation to the ground somewhat further to the south and west. "We had the pleasure of entering upon a green wady before we stopped to-day, of riding over grass, however thin it might be, and seeing by the wayside the purple iris, large and small, wild oats, daisies, buttercups, and abundance of the homely mallow. *The whole ground might have been English*, except for the fine scarlet anemones, which grew as plentifully as any other weed." And the day before, she writes, "I saw three large flocks of wild geese . . . and some of the company observed a herd of gazelles afar."

Now, it is certain that, of the variety in the aspect and resources of the ground of the Mosaic history,

which is apparent in these extracts, our examiner of the Pentateuch is utterly unconscious. Yet he might have learned them from Dr. Stanley's admirable work, which he has so freely quoted, as well as from the researches of writers such as Drs. Robinson and Wilson, whose aid most examiners of this portion of Scripture have found to be essential in their investigations. So, again, but little additional research was needed to learn the existence of those ruins and inscriptions which, as I have reminded you, prove decisively that large populations were settled, even in Christian times, upon this territory. Paran was an episcopal city in the fifth century, and was in existence until the twelfth. And on the upper part of the highlands, on which the people were so long encamped, the ruins of at least seven towns, of considerable extent, belonging to the Roman and early Christian period, are traceable. Moreover, the peninsula was constantly traversed by trading caravans through at least six routes; and even now, in its evidently changed and wasted state, its resources are adequate to the support of not less than 10,000 inhabitants, if we include, as here we properly may, the tribe of the Jehalin, which spreads itself far away, beyond the South of Palestine, upon the "pastures in the wilderness."

But, says Dr. Colenso, in his "answers" to these considerations—as they are brought forward by Stanley and Kalisch, in the extracts which he has given (pp. 67-78) from these writers,—How can they be recon-

ciled with the express language of the sacred writer himself upon the subject? Does he not speak again and again of the scene of the wanderings as a "waste and howling," and as a "great and terrible" wilderness? Does he not represent the people as complaining of it as "an evil place," where there was no vegetation, or water to drink, and in which they and their cattle must die? And does not the prophet (Jer. ii. 6) speak of it as a "land of deserts and of pits, through which no man passed, and in which no man dwelt?"— Undoubtedly, I answer; and if Dr. Colenso had really examined the passages from which these statements were taken, he would have found that, in every instance, these epithets are carefully limited by the historian to two particular localities, as again that he has also closely connected them with other epithets and phrases, which show that he did not intend them to be generally descriptive of the entire peninsula. If you will turn to the passages which our examiner brings forward in this instance, you will find that every one of them refers, either to that long, arid, and desert valley, which stretches from the Dead Sea to Akabah, or else to the barren country, east of the Seir mountains, on the frontier edge of which, where it blends with the Arabian Desert, the Israelites were compelled to march in the closing stages of their journey. You will observe how I have marked, from the remembrance of some painful days which I myself passed there, the distinctive features of the former of these two places in the illustrated version of

the people's wanderings, which I have above given. Moses, in his review of their journey, might well speak of this valley as “waste and howling,” and as “terrible;” but, in one instance where he does so (Deut. xxxii. 10), he carefully connects it with the אֶרֶץ מִזְבֵּחַ (*i. e.* desert land), unto which (see Gesen., *in voc.*) no such epithet was suitable; and in the other he expressly reminds his hearers and readers that he is referring to the country which they “saw by the way of the Mount of the Amorites, as they came to Kadesh Barnea.” When he uses the words “great and terrible” (Deut. viii. 15) in connexion with their marching ground on the east of Edom, he carefully reminds us that it was of this place he was speaking, by alluding to the “fiery serpents” which there afflicted them; and again he refers separately, in the following verse, to the מִזְבֵּחַ, where he recalls the support which in this place was vouchsafed to them.

From all this you must begin to see that Dr. Colenso has really been bringing into view the accuracy of the “story” he has striven to discredit. But if you will now turn to the passage quoted by him from Jeremiah (ii. 6), I think this impression will be deepened. It is, indeed, true that the prophet speaks of part of the country traversed by the people as a “land which no man passed through,” and in which “no man dwelt.” But he, too, guards himself, in the same verse, from that misconception of his meaning into which Dr. Colenso has fallen: he expressly warns us that it is only part of the ground of the

wanderings he is speaking of, by previously referring to the other, and wholly different, region that was comprised in it. More than this I surely need not say in reference to that particular difficulty raised by our examiner, which we are here considering. With the clue which I have thus suggested, I will ask you to look afresh over this, which is by far the most elaborate, chapter in Dr. Colenso's volume. And I will venture to affirm that you will then recognise an amount of misrepresentation in its sixteen pages which will awaken your astonishment, not less than your indignation. Other feelings, however, may well succeed these when you also see that this weapon, too, of our assailant may be turned against himself, and that he has really brought into view the truthfulness of the record which he has been striving to discredit, and to defame.

His misconceptions, however, concerning the physical character of the peninsula and its resources do not by any means constitute his only difficulty. Another is continually brought forward in different parts of eighteen chapters of his work, and he more than once assures us that this finally decides the un-historical character of the Mosaic writings. I am here referring to what he calls his proofs of the untrustworthiness of the numbers given in them. For this, he assures us, is beyond all question. Figures cannot be mistaken ; sums accurately worked out supply a witness that is unimpeachable. Measure the open

spaces of the peninsula, and compare with them the census of the population; consider the length of the caravan in its marchings, and the extent of the ground which must have been covered by the encampment. Think of the time that would be consumed in offering the sacrifices, the number of the pigeons that must be eaten by the priests, &c.; and, he tells us, conclusions will then be forced on you, "which alone, independent of all other considerations, are enough to throw discredit upon the historical character of the whole narrative." He further believes that "to the great majority" of his readers, "they will be as new" as they were to himself "until a recent period;" and he is convinced that, if they are duly considered, there will be such a defeat and overthrow of our convictions, that "five years hence, unless liberty of speech be granted in these matters, it will be impossible that any of the more hopeful and intelligent of our young men, &c.," as quoted supra, p. 4.

In reading all this, one thought, among many others, instantly occurred to me, as it must have occurred to most readers familiar with the subject, and it was this: that, whatever other value may belong to these numerical investigations, the merit of novelty at all events cannot be claimed by them. I remember to have met, many years ago, with another "examination" of the Old Testament, of which Dr. Colenso probably has not heard. Certainly he cannot have read it, for, if he had, references and inverted commas should, as I shall

show you, have been inserted in certain pages of his volume, where they do not now appear. The work to which I am referring is entitled "*The Age of Reason; being an investigation of true and fabulous Theology*, by Thomas Paine." On reading Dr. Colenso's computations, I was immediately reminded of it, for I had an impression that it contained some arithmetical arguments of a similar character. Lest, however, I should be mistaken, I sent for the "shilling edition" of the work, which I had reason to know was published and circulated in immense numbers for the purpose of giving working men instruction similar to that with which one of our Bishops is now providing them. Alas! the demand had exceeded the supply! The publisher reported that "his shilling edition was out of print; but the '*Age of Reason*' might be had for three shillings, along with the entire religious works"—of the illustrious theologian. Of this treasure I accordingly possessed myself, and found the fact is as I supposed. I much fear that Dr. Colenso will feel annoyed at having been anticipated by such a writer in his applications of arithmetic. But he has been. In the "*Age of Reason*" he will find sums worked out in his own style, and with results not less convincing than those which have been established by him. I shall have more to say upon this subject. But thus much I thought it well to say at once concerning the novelty of his investigations, of which let me further remark, that he has not brought from them one consideration which has not been long familiar to every

thoughtful reader of the Scriptures. This, indeed, with most amusing simplicity, he has himself shown, by appending to each of his own "original" dissertations, pages from the now familiar writings of Kurtz and Hengstenberg, in which we have full discussions of the very points concerning which he tells us that "I believe they will be new to the great majority of my readers, as I freely admit they were to myself till within a comparatively recent period."

But now let us examine the particular difficulty in question. He tells us, then, that "not only is the number '600,000 on foot, beside women and children,' given distinctly in Exod. xii. 37 (as the total number of the emigrants) at the time of their leaving Egypt, but we have it recorded again, thrice over, in *different forms*, in Exod. xxxviii. 25-28, where the number of all that 'went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward,' is reckoned at 603,550; and this is repeated in Num. i. 46; and it is modified once more at the end of the wanderings to 601,730 (Num. xxxvi. 51). Besides which, on each occasion of numbering, each separate tribe is numbered, and the sum of the separate results makes up the whole. Thus," he continues, "this number is woven, as a kind of thread, into the whole story of Exodus, and cannot be taken out without tearing the whole fabric into pieces." Then he reminds us that this number of adult males implies a population of more than two millions, being, in fact, nearly equal to that of London at the present time. And he bids

us remark the conclusions which flow by the surest processes from this result.

In the first place, he says, it is clearly inconsistent with the statement that only seventy persons went down into Egypt, and that they abode there not more at most than 230 years. They could not, in an ordinary way, have grown into any population approaching this in such a period; and if we suppose that they were increased miraculously, we are still met by difficulties which are as obvious, as they are insuperable. This total number of adults, and the enumeration of the separate tribes, are inconsistent with other figures given by the writer (pp. 107-112). Moreover, the spaces of the wilderness are not extensive enough for the encampment of such hosts (pp. 38, 39); its resources are insufficient to maintain them (pp. 65-81): water and food for them, much less for their flocks and herds, could not have been obtained (*ib.*). Here, we are told, are *plain difficulties lying on the surface of the narrative*; and in regard to many of them we have no hint of any miraculous interposition; and since we have no right to invent one, miracles cannot here be pleaded. Manifestly, therefore, the history of the Pentateuch is *unhistorical* (= *fictitious*).

Here Dr. Colenso leaves his conclusion. But surely other conclusions, needing also to be taken into account, flow from it. There is a series of inferences which must yet further be developed, as thus:—

“Therefore, and for reasons so strikingly obvious,

the history in the Pentateuch is unhistorical, in other words, it is fictitious.” Therefore, all those marvellous conformities of page after page in it to extant facts, and those not less marvellous interior coherences which connect book with book, and the parts of each book with one another—are accidental; or else the compiler of the “legends,” who was so careful and astute in respect of all these points, was foolish enough to betray himself by obvious and egregious blunders, which the most superficial glance was sufficient to detect. Therefore, too, all the Jews, in Egypt as well as Palestine, who were familiar with the peninsula, and constantly journeying across it, and to whom this manifestly fictitious “story,” with all its glaring absurdities on the face of it, might well be expected to show itself in its real character—were either imposed on by the legends, or agreed to acquiesce in the imposture. Therefore, too, all the neighbouring people to whom they presented their Pentateuch, and in the Greek as well as Hebrew language, as the historical record of their church, and as the interpretation of their worship—maintained silence, though they might have been expected to proclaim aloud their scorn of a document which was so palpably incongruous with scenes as familiar to them as are the Alpine valleys, or the Scotch highlands, to thousands of our countrymen. Therefore, too, if *this* may be said, He Who claimed for these writings historical authenticity, was also misled by the imposture, and aided in its propagation.

Therefore the same charge must lie against all thoughtful Bible-readers since, large communities of them having been natives, or else neighbours, of the country in which the “story” is alleged to have occurred. And therefore, too, Dr. Colenso is the first Christian Bishop who has been gifted with sagacity enough to discover, or who has had the courage and honesty to proclaim, for the advantage of his fellow-Churchmen, the palpable delusions under which all of them are labouring. Unto which “therefores” I need not say innumerable others may be added.

Have Dr. Colenso and his disciples, if he has any, reflected on these difficulties, surrounding them on every side, which necessarily flow from his conclusion? He tells us that it rests on matters of fact which are obvious and unquestionable. But he does not appear to see that the more palpable these are, the more unmanageable is the dilemma in which his inference from them has involved him. Supposing he has proved that the spaces and numbers given in the history are, in certain instances, palpably incongruous, would not any man really acquainted with it, say at once;—The very obviousness of your difficulty supplies proof enough that it is capable of explanation! This is certain on the supposition that the history is authentic. But it *is not less certain*, even if we suppose the document was forged, or that it has been edited from some legendary fragments of the early Jewish history. For, consider the marvellous care which has been bestowed on all but the few sentences in it

to which you are alluding. How perfect in all other respects is its interior coherence and symmetry, and its harmony with truths that are unquestionable! These congruities cannot be fortuitous; and how consummate, on our present hypothesis, is the subtilty displayed by them. Such a forger or editor could not have blundered in matters so palpable as these you dwell on: there *must* be explanations which will bring them into consistency with the remainder of his “story.”

So, I think, every man of common sense would reason, even if he read the books unconscious of the reverence with which we must look on them. He would say there must be misconception somewhere in the perplexities which develope into such a series of inferences as those which are above enumerated; and, if he were really “examining” these writings, he would then apply himself, as we must now do, to its discovery.

You will find all the considerations or arguments which Dr. Colenso has connected with the difficulty now before us, fairly represented in the statement of it which I have given above. And here, as you again review them, you will at once remark that the first, viz., that the few (seventy) immigrants into Egypt could not have grown into the enormous multitude given by the census—has already been disposed of. We have seen that nothing can be more certain than the fact that, instead of seventy, or thereabouts, the caravan headed by Jacob in his migration must have included many

hundreds at the least, and that it is most probable that upwards of two thousand were comprised in it. Now such a company, increasing in many successive generations at the ordinary rate of increase, would become that which the sacred writer calls them, a “great nation,” long within the time which is assigned by him. You observe I speak of “many” successive generations, and I use this word to call your attention to one of the most singular errors and misstatements on the part of our examiner, which, exuberant as he is in this kind, I have noticed in his volume. If you will turn to what he has written, in chap. xvi., on this subject, you will see that it all proceeds on these three assumptions, viz., (1) That the average rate of the increase “from generation to generation” was four and a half sons to each parent, “*since (he says) the twelve sons of Jacob had between them* (at the time of the migration) *fifty-three sons, i.e., on an average four and a half.*” Were no more sons, then, born to them after their settlement in the country? This cannot be supposed, when the oldest of them was at that time not more than fifty. Then he assumes (2) that because, according to the promise, they “went out in the fourth generation (as we see in the family of Moses),” not more than four generations had been born in all the other families, during the whole duration of their settlement; and (3) that there was only one generation of the emigrants younger than that of Moses or his contemporaries, when there must have

been three at least, and probably there were four, or even five. Obviously each of these assumptions is gratuitous; and when they are, therefore, disregarded, and we have fixed on only a few hundreds even as the number of the original immigrants, the first element of the difficulty before us, on which Dr. Colenso lays such important stress, is entirely removed.

His assumptions, however, in this instance are not more gratuitous than is that contained in the statement, that the numbers 600,000 and 603,550 (of adult males), given in Exod. xii. 37; xxxviii. 25-28; and in Num. i. 45, and xxvi. 51, "is woven as a kind of thread into the whole story of the Exodus, and cannot be taken out without tearing the whole fabric to pieces." This is simply not the case; as you will see, if you will now turn to these passages, and observe the connexion in which they stand. If, in reading them, you will omit the second clause of Exod. xii. 37, and the last clause of Exod. xxxviii. 26; and if you will connect Num. i. 16, with the first verse of Num. iii. and omit Num. xxvi. 5-51,—you will find that not only does the "story" read continuously, but that not one historical detail in it is then omitted. So far from "being woven as a kind of thread" into the Mosaic history, these sheets of the roll, in which it was originally read in the great legislator's autograph, may be detached from the remainder without one fact being omitted from his narrative. Let me here call your special attention to this point, unto which I shall again have

occasion to recur, since, as you will see, it is closely connected with another, which indeed is the chief consideration that should be brought forward in respect of the difficulty now before us.

You will anticipate me when I say, that I am here alluding to the principle, acknowledged, and acted on, by the soundest and most exact interpreters of ancient writings, viz., that confusions in the numerical statements of such writings are, *alone and of themselves*, insufficient reasons for invalidating the trustworthiness of their authors. Hence, for example, no one questions that Xerxes actually invaded Greece, though Herodotus (or one of his transcribers) affirms (vii. 186) that the Persian army consisted of more than 5,000,000 of soldiers and attendants, when, according to our best recent authorities, it did not consist of more than one-fifth of that number. The methods of representing numbers in ancient writings, and the absence of any help in the interpretation of them by the context, are obvious and familiar causes of uncertainty; and it is well known that from the operation of these causes the Hebrew Scriptures have not been exempted. Dr. Colenso himself gives us many instances in point, though he denies that "the suggestion (furnished by them) will avail here, however it may be applied in other cases." But, why not? we may well ask, seeing, as we have seen, how gratuitous is his assertion that the numbers which perplex him "cannot be taken out of the story of the Exodus, without tearing the whole fabric to pieces."

In the language of another Bishop of our Church, in his reply to Paine, we may say to the Bishop of Natal, “That every child may have an argument for its infidelity, you display the particulars, and show your own skill in arithmetic by summing up. And can you suppose”—here I give an exact parallel to the sentence which follows in *The Apology*—“that the writer (or editor) of the Pentateuch, who elsewhere shows himself so accurately familiar with his subject, could not avoid the blundering incongruities between spaces and numbers with which you charge him? You know, undoubtedly,” continues the bishop, “that the Hebrew letters denoted also numbers, and that there was such a great similarity between some of these letters that it was extremely easy for the transcriber of a manuscript to mistake a ב for a ב (or 2 for 20), a ג for a ג (or 3 for 50), a ד for a ד (or 4 for 400). Now what have we to do with numerical contradictions in the Bible, but to attribute them, wherever they occur, to this obvious source of error—the inattention of the transcriber in writing one letter for another that was like it?”¹⁹ Unto which obvious suggestion of familiar

¹⁹ Watson's *Apology, &c.*, in a Series of Letters addressed to Thomas Paine, pp. 141, 142, ed. 1796. In connexion with the above extract another passage occurs in this work, which is well worth attention at the present time: “The history of the Old Testament has, without doubt, some difficulties in it; but a minute philosopher who busies himself in searching them out, whilst he neglects to contemplate the harmony of all its parts, the wisdom and goodness of God displayed throughout the whole,

knowledge and of common sense, it may be added that, as I before remarked, this rule is habitually adopted in the interpretation of all other ancient writings; nor—unless, indeed, we insist, as Dr. Colenso appears to do, on the miraculous transmission, as well as authorship of the inspired volume—can any reason be given why The Scriptures should be exempted from the application of it.

They are not, in fact, exempted. This very rule of interpreting the sacred text is constantly used by the most rigorous expositors; and many passages, identical in character with those which suggest Dr. Colenso's difficulty in the case before us, are satisfactorily explained by means of it. Take, as an instance, 1 Sam. xiii. 5, where we read of “thirty thousand chariots” in the army with which the Philistines “came up” to fight against Israel at Michmash. Of course it is at once seen that we have here an impossible number,

appears to me to be like a purblind man, who, in surveying a picture, objects to the simplicity of the design, and the beauty of the execution, from the asperities he has discovered in the canvass and the colouring. The history of the Old Testament, notwithstanding the real difficulties which occur in it, notwithstanding the scoffs and cavils of unbelievers, appears to me to have such internal evidences of its truth, to be so corroborated by the most ancient profane histories, so confirmed by the present circumstances of the world, that if I were not a Christian, I would become a Jew. You think this history a collection of contradictions I look upon it to be the oldest, the truest, the most comprehensive, and the most important history in the world.”—Ib. pp. 136, 137.

and that the error is one of the character described in the above extract. “Critically examining” the passage accordingly, we find that one manuscript omits שְׁלֵשִׁים (30) in the number of the chariots, and that the Syriac and Arabic versions give them as 3000. On further examination, it is suggested that ל of לְיָשָׁרְאָל having been twice written by mistake, was then interpreted 30, and that the present reading originated in this way; or that the true number may be לְאָלָה (31), where אָלָה was afterwards taken for אֶלְאָלָה (1000).²⁰ Meanwhile, the substantial fact of the history, viz., that the Israelites were suffering, at this time, from a formidable invasion by their warlike neighbours, is wholly unaffected by these conjectures. Nor will any one, unless he is under the influence of some foolish superstition with respect to the *transmission* of the sacred text, be in any wise disturbed in his reading of the history by conjectures of this kind.

But, it may be rejoined, all this proceeds on the unproved assumption that, in the original manuscripts, the numbers were not written out in full, but that, for the expression of them, letters with numerical values were employed. It is almost certain that such was indeed the case. But, let us suppose the contrary, and that the number, in Exodus xii. 37, on which Dr. Colenso lays such stress, was given at full length. It would then be written thus, the points being of course

²⁰ Comp. Davidson's *Revision of the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament, in loc.*

omitted; שְׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת אֶלְף (i.e. 600,000). But how closely do these words resemble שְׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת וְאֶלְף (i.e. 1600): they only differ by the insertion of ו in the latter expression; and how easily might—I do not say *this*, but—*such* a difference escape the most accurate transcriber! This instance, in connexion with the remarks already made, will show you how much force there is in the observation of our examiner (p. 141) that “we cannot here have recourse to the ordinary supposition that there may be something wrong in the Hebrew numerals.”

But this is not the only possible solution of Dr. Colenso’s obvious difficulty in this instance, which, once more I beg you to observe, lies on the surface of the history, as most thoughtful readers of Scripture have long ago seen, and candidly, *and unanxiously*, acknowledged. Let me here ask you to recall the remark which I just now made, respecting the groundlessness of the statement that the number in question is so involved with the structure of the narrative, that it cannot, except by processes involving demolition, be removed from it. This, I repeat, is simply untrue, as any one may satisfy himself in the course of five minutes’ examination. Bearing this in mind, then, I will ask you to think of a suggestion, which I make with diffidence, and am willing to withdraw on good cause being shown, though I think that, at all events, it is deserving of attention. Might not those passages, which relate to the numbers—not, observe, to the “num-

berings"—of the people, and which, as you see, *can be withdrawn from the history without affecting one of its details*—have been accurately, and in good faith, inserted, when a census of the people was taken after their establishment in Palestine, at about the time of the beginning of the monarchy. We know that the autograph of the Pentateuch, in which Moses wrote down the history of the people, and their laws, and which was found in his tent by his mourning survivors after their long and hopeless search for him—was not edited and published (may I say?), until after that settlement of the population, which, according to the best estimates we can make of it, must then have numbered about two and a half millions. Many additions were unquestionably made to the copy which Moses wrote; and may not this, which I am now indicating, have been one of them? Let me ask that you will again look, in this view of them, to the passages in question; and I think you will agree with me, that another possible solution of what had been acknowledged as a difficulty, long before that eventful day of last year when Dr. Colenso began his studies in the Pentateuch—is hereby suggested; and it is one, observe, which leaves all the numbers *as they stand*, though indeed, under an aspect different from that in which we have commonly regarded them.

Unto all this I need only add that, when we receive the books of Moses in their true character, and take account of only some of the evidences which authen-

ticate them, the existence of only one explanation of Dr. Colenso's difficulty is sufficient for our purpose. Even if it be received as only possible, and not satisfactory, it neutralises the use which our examiner has made of the incongruity between the spaces, &c. of the wilderness, and the numbers of the people—to destroy the positive evidence in our possession; and the seventy or eighty pages of his volume founded on this one difficulty are bereft of all their plausibility. In other words, we then see that there is not one sentence in them which can touch our sure conviction that the original text, as it came from the lawgiver's hand, was faultlessly accurate, and that it has been as nearly as possible accurately transmitted. We know that of every real difficulty now seen in it an explanation can be found, though we may not be able to discover it. Nor in the case before us, does any uncertainty as to where the real explanation lies, inflict on us the slightest loss. Suppose that, instead of two millions and a half, we must substitute an unknown (it must be a large) quantity, as the total number of the emigrants, what disadvantage do we thereby suffer? We read the entire narrative just as we did formerly, and no shock will be inflicted on the convictions of any readers, except indeed of those whose convictions may very advantageously be shaken, since they may be so delivered from their superstitions with regard to the mere words of Holy Scripture, and may be led from the bare form to the

substance and the spirit of that which has been written in it for their learning.

Now, however, we must pass on to some further “difficulties with regard to the circumstances of the wanderings,” though they will require but slight notice, since the speciousness of some of them is almost entirely removed by the above considerations concerning the numbers; and others have been sufficiently dealt with in the several reviews which have already given you some idea of the value of this “critical examination.”

The first of the group to which then I would here ask for your attention, you will find in chap. xviii. entitled, “The Danites and Levites at the time of the Exodus.” Dr. Colenso cannot understand how, since Dan had only one son born to him (Gen. xlvi. 23; and Num. xxvi. 42), and the entire number of Levi’s descendants in the third generation amounted only to sixteen, these tribes could have numbered anything like the multitudes mentioned in the census. You, of course, anticipate me when I say that his difficulty in this instance arises entirely from his misconception of the numbers in the original migration. Take into account the retainers who “went down to Egypt” with these two sons of Jacob, and who, having all been circumcised, (Gen. xvii. 10-14; and xxxiv. 15, 16) were therefore numbered as members of their families; and, instead of a difficulty, we find an “undesigned coincidence” between two widely separated portions of the history.

And I think it is probable the same thing may be said respecting the alleged “inconsistency between the number of the Levites at the second census, when compared with that at the first” (p. 109). Is it not, in the highest degree, probable that this tribe was the one which chiefly suffered in the large mortality which is expressly (Num. xvi.) connected with the sons of Korah? This suggests an explanation which appears to be quite sufficient to neutralise Dr. Colenso’s argument from the inconsistency, without taking into additional account the general suggestion as given above with respect to the numbers, or reminding our examiner that his “inconsistency” might be capable of an explanation from some other circumstances on which the history is silent, and which might satisfy even his notions of agreement.

With regard to his difficulties in chaps. iv. and v., concerning the “assembling of the congregation at the door of the tabernacle,” and the statement that “Moses and Joshua addressed all Israel,” his numerous reviewers must have surely satisfied Dr. Colenso that, in this case at least, his error is as ridiculous, as it is palpable. We have only to interpret the statements in Lev. viii. 1-14, and Deut. v. 1, on the principle familiar to every one who knows the meaning of a “representative constitution,” and not even Dr. Colenso need be conscious of any difficulty in them. Innumerable instances of the same language are fami-

liar to every Englishman, as in the following passage, which one of his critics has quoted from the learned Selden's *Table Talk* : “The voices and consent of the whole clergy were involved in the bishops ; and at this day (*i.e. cir. 1650*), the bishops' writs serve to bring all these to parliament ; but the bishops themselves stand for all.” So, with regard to the Witenagemote it was considered that, “*though the whole people were held to be present, and their names entered on the record*, they were virtually represented by the Eolderman or Eor, the Shire-greeve, and some of the chief men, though there is no appearance of election.” We have here an abundantly sufficient answer to the futile cavils of these two chapters. But it may be worth adding, that I distinctly remember many open spaces in the peninsula which are singularly adapted, even for such gatherings of the whole congregation as those which our examiner insists we are reading of in the passages he has brought forward. On the plain of Sebâych, for example, where the people were so long encamped “before the mount,” many scores of thousands might have been assembled in the presence of a speaker, who was distinctly visible to all of them, and audible also by an immense proportion of their number.²¹ The naturalness of these very statements, which appear so incomprehensible to Dr. Colenso, was strongly felt both

²¹ For a description of this plain, see *Scripture Lands, &c.*, Appendix, Note B.

by my companions and myself, on the very ground which was in the view of the author when they were recorded.

Here, too, I am reminded of the strangeness of the difficulty in connexion with the “daily necessities of the people,” which Dr. Colenso hints at in p. 39. Any of his friends who have travelled through the desert could have so enlightened him on this point that he would have felt bound to cancel, at least, half of what he has there written. And let me here give you an extract from the “*Punjaub Sanitary Report for 1862*,” which has been well brought forward in this connexion. “In our jails all the refuse is buried in the garden, and, being rapidly decomposed . . . no inconvenience is ever experienced. . . . I myself believe (adds the writer of the Report), that the customs of the Asiatics, in this respect, are much more consistent with true sanitary science than the use of public latrines which we are trying to introduce. . . . *Certain it is that the practice of the natives of this country is in strict accordance with the Divine ordinance which was given to the first great camp the world ever saw, and the general rules, for the preservation of health and the prevention of epidemic disease and contagion, are as applicable to the natives of India in these days, as they were, centuries ago, to the children of Israel.*”

Here, once more, the weapon of our assailant is turned against himself. And the same conversion may be effected, still more remarkably, in respect of his diffi-

culty (p. 40) as to the priests' conveyance of the offal of the victim to some "clean place" beyond the limits of the encampment. Surely, we might ask for the application of some Hebrew, as well as arithmetical lore, on the part of one who is "critically examining" this Jewish document. If, in the present instance, our reasonable demand had been conceded, Dr. Colenso would not have brought this difficulty forward. He would then have seen that, in the original, the causative, or hiphil, conjugation of the verb is used. "*He shall cause* the skin of the bullock, &c., even the whole bullock, *to go forth*," is an exact version of the original. So in regard to the passage (Lev. vi. 11)—which, since the publication of his volume, Dr. Colenso has adduced in vindication of this example of his errors—we again, as we must now more emphatically, ask, why did he not look to it as it stands in his Hebrew Bible? Then he would have seen that, in this place too, it is expressly said, "He (the priest) shall *cause* the ashes *to go forth* without the camp into a clean place." In fact, we may say that, in both cases, the idea of the priest himself doing the work spoken of, is expressly negatived. Nor, if we remember that *qui facit per alium facit per se*—need the contrary impression be received even by a reader of our English version. Though, no doubt, if our translators could have foreseen such a phenomenon as the publication of this volume, they would have substituted "he shall cause to go forth" for "he shall carry forth," in an exacter translation of the passage.

It is in perfect keeping with these specimens of Dr. Colenso's "criticism," that in regard generally to his remarks on the observance of the Mosaic institutions in the wilderness, he has overlooked the fact that *it is nowhere stated that they were observed during the years of the people's "wanderings."* In the very words enacting them, they are, in many instances, obviously prospective, as in the case of the injunctions implying residence in houses and in walled towns. This fact at once extinguishes another ten pages of his volume, and so exempts us from the necessity of any further examination of this part of it. You will find that not one statement in it, of even the slightest consequence, in relation to the progress of the people through the wilderness, and their occupations there, has been unnoticed. And I think you will agree with me that, thus far at least, we have seen no reason for abandoning our conviction that the "story" of the Exodus *is* based on "some real historical foundation," and *is* "to be regarded as historically true."

III. We come now to the third of the divisions under which we have classified Dr. Colenso's "difficulties," and will here consider those which relate to the enactments of the Mosaic polity, and to the circumstances of the conquest.

Under this head we first place his remarks on the laws respecting slaves. They are introduced by allusions to the "trivial nature of a vast number of

conversations and commands ascribed directly to Jehovah, especially the multiplied ceremonial minutiae laid down in the Levitical law.” Of course the conclusion meant to be suggested by this incidental reference is, that the triviality of the “ceremonial minutiae,” &c., shows that they are ascribed falsely to Jehovah, and that the claim in their behalf of Divine inspiration cannot be conceded. Now, without here adverting to other considerations—such, *e. g.* as those which might occur to any reader of the Epistle to the Hebrews—an oversight of which is implied in this statement, this is plain, *viz.*, that Dr. Colenso is here unmindful of the constantly-increasing reasons for the belief that “trivial” is the most inaccurate designation that could possibly have been applied to those enactments to which he is referring. Here, since I can only briefly notice a subject on which you know I have elsewhere dwelt at length,²² let me just call your attention to the title of a small work not long since published: “*The Observance of the Sanitary Laws, divinely appointed, in the Old Testament Scriptures, sufficient to ward off Preventable Disease from Christians as well as Israelites*,” by C. Richson; *With notes by John Sutherland, M.D. of the General Board of Health*. You remember, too, that Milton says, of the social and political enactments, “ascribed directly to Jehovah,” which of

²² *Scripture Studies*, pp. 103-117; 173-193. Appendix, Note M.

course must be numbered among the “trivial commands” whereof Dr. Colenso speaks, that—

“ In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so.”

Such authorities may well cause Dr. Colenso to reconsider his use of the word “trivial” in relation to those statutory portions of the Pentateuch which he appears to have had in view when he employed it. Even his eighteen months’ study of the book might have informed him that men who have most learnedly and philosophically examined it, give reasons for believing that every portion, even where it seems most useless, has important bearings yet to be developed, on the welfare of nations as well as of individuals.

In view of such convictions, on the part of such inquirers, Dr. Colenso’s hasty deliverance on the subject might well have been withheld. Or, at all events, some better instances, in disproof of such convictions, should have been adduced by him. I venture to think that “most pious minds, when they read these words professedly coming from the Holy and Blessed One (p. 9), ‘If the master (of a Hebrew servant) have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons and daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out free by himself,’ ” would have attended, as most plainly Dr. Colenso has not done, to the words *immediately* following, which, strange to say, are these—“But if the servant shall

plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free, then”—will the readers of Dr. Colenso's volume who have not turned to the passage believe—that *then* arrangements are described by which the man and his wife and children are to be kept unseparated !

If Dr. Colenso had only so far controlled the shock given to his feelings by the *fourth* verse that he could have gone on to read the *fifth* and *sixth*, and especially if, having Dr. Kalisch's commentary at hand, he had read that learned writer's remarks upon the passage, it is hard to see what other thoughts, except those of reverent admiration for the wisdom and humanity of the Mosaic legislation concerning slaves, could have occurred to him. Then, too, he would probably have “examined,” with somewhat closer attention, the next passage he has brought forward on the subject, this, viz., “If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall surely be punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished ; for he is his money.” “I shall never forget (he says, p. 9), the revulsion of feeling with which a very intelligent Christian native, with whose help I was translating these words into the Zulu tongue, first heard them as words said to be uttered by the same great and gracious Being, whom I was teaching him to trust in and adore. His whole soul revolted against the notion that the Great and Blessed God, the Merciful Father of all mankind, would

speak of a servant or maid as mere ‘money,’ and permit a horrible crime to go unpunished, because the victim of the brutal usage had survived a few hours. My own heart and conscience fully sympathised with his ; but I then clung to the notion that the main substance of the narrative was historically true, and I relieved his difficulty and my own for the present by telling him that I supposed, &c.”

But more need not be quoted, and, indeed, it is humiliation enough to have been under the necessity of copying out even thus much of what is, I suppose, the most remarkable paragraph that has ever been written by a Bishop of our Church. I venture to say that no intelligent reader of Scripture has read this marvellous page, who has not impatiently desired that could he have had a few words with this same Zulu native on the occasion which is thus referred to, so that he might have said to the good man ;—Do you not see, my friend, that the words by which you and your episcopal teacher here are so perplexed suggest a consideration which it was only just and reasonable to take account of in the case supposed ? “ *For he is his money*” is here given as the reason for thinking it unlikely that the master would risk his servant’s life in the chastisement he had been administering. Not in contempt of the servant at all, but in justice to the master, is this phrase introduced : it is inserted as an indication that death, if it ensued, was probably accidental. And if any doubt upon the subject remains in your mind after

again reading the passage in this view, you can easily satisfy yourself that the impression you have gathered from it is contrary to all the injunctions, and to the whole spirit, of the Hebrew laws respecting slaves. Turn to such passages as these: Exod. xxi. 4-6; Lev. xxv. 49; Deut. xv. 12-14. Or, again, read what is said in Exod. xx. 10; xxi. 26, 27; Deut. v. 14; xxiii. 16, with respect to foreign slaves. Compare these laws with those of any other country in which this institution has existed; and you will be impressed, as every one who has really "examined" this subject has been, with the singular humanity and wisdom on the part of the inspired legislator which is disclosed by them. You will not again charge him with encouraging either contempt or cruelty towards persons in this unfortunate condition. You will see that, while he kindly and wisely dealt with what appears to have been an inevitable evil of those times, and constantly enjoined *respect* to those suffering beneath it, he made provision for its gradual extinction. Only give some careful attention to this part of the volume you are examining, and I am quite sure you will therein find the strongest reasons for believing that not only "professedly," but actually, it "comes from the Holy and blessed One, the Father and Faithful Creator of Mankind."

One really cannot understand how such an obvious explanation of his own, and his convert's difficulties, in this instance, did not instantly relieve what Dr. Colenso calls (p. 10) "the great strain upon the cord which then

bound him to the ordinary belief in the historical veracity of the Pentateuch.” Alas! since then, that cord has snapped in twain altogether; and how thankful “is he (p. 143) that (in consequence) he is no longer obliged to believe . . . in the story related in Numb. xxxi.” concerning the war upon the Midianites. This is the only circumstance connected with the conquest which Dr. Colenso brings forward among the considerations, “most of which,” he believes, “will be new to the majority of his readers, as he freely admits they were to himself till within a comparatively recent period.” And we must, therefore, conclude that he claims some originality for his comments on this “story.” Here, however, I am unfeignedly sorry to inform him that, more than sixty years ago, his predecessor in the examination of the Pentateuch, to whom I before referred, not only comments in his own style upon Moses’ “incredible statement” in this instance, but actually uses, and more than once, his own peculiar epithets in doing so. Thomas Paine, too, tells us (*Age of Reason*, Part II.) that, in this account, he finds Moses delivering an order “to *butcher* the boys, to massacre the mothers, and debauch the daughters.” (Compare Colenso, p. 144.) And for this “*butchery*” he calls Moses a “detestable villain,” just as our Bishop connects it with Nena Sahib and the “tragedy of Cawnpore.”

So much for the novelty of Dr. Colenso’s comments upon the “story.” Another of our Bishops wrote in his answer to that earlier examiner of the

Pentateuch : “ I see nothing in this proceeding (*i. e.*, as it is actually described, and taking into account all the circumstances connected with it), but good policy combined with mercy. The young men might have become dangerous avengers of what they would esteem their country’s wrongs ; the mothers might have again allured the Israelites to the love of licentious pleasures and the practice of idolatry, and brought another plague upon the congregation ; but the young maidens, not being polluted by the flagitious habits of their mothers, nor likely to create disturbance by rebellion, were kept alive. You give a different turn to the matter ; you say ‘ that 32,000 women children were consigned to debauchery by the order of Moses.’ Prove this, and I will allow that Moses was the horrid monster you make him ; prove this, and I will allow that the Bible is what you call it—a book of lies, wickedness, and blasphemy ; prove this, or, excuse my warmth if I say to you, what Paul said to Elymas the sorcerer I did not when I began, think that I should have been moved to this severity of rebuke by any thing you could have written ; but when so gross a misrepresentation is made of God’s proceedings, coolness would be a crime. The women children were not reserved for the purpose of debauchery, but of slavery. A custom, indeed, abhorrent from our manners, but everywhere practised in former times, and still practised in countries where the benignity of the Christian religion has not softened the ferocity of human nature.

You here admit a part of the account given in the Bible respecting the expedition against Midian, to be a true account; it is not unreasonable to desire that you will admit the whole, or show sufficient reason why you admit one part and reject the other. I will mention the part to which you have paid no attention. The Israelitish army consisted but of a mere handful when opposed to the people of Midian. Yet, when the officers made a muster of their troops after their return from the war, they found that they had not lost a single man. This circumstance struck them as so decisive an evidence of God's interposition, that out of the spoils they had taken they offered 'an oblation to the Lord, an atonement for their souls.' Do but believe what the 'captains of thousands' and the 'captains of hundreds' believed at the time when these things happened, and we shall never more hear of your objections to the Bible from its account of the wars of Moses."²³

IV. Here at length we reach the "general consideration with respect to the statements in the Bible which touch upon geology and other sciences." I need not remind you how numerously, and with what an offensive purpose, such considerations are scattered throughout this volume, as, for example, where we are told (p. vii.) that "now he (Dr. Colenso) knew for

²³ Watson's *Apology*, &c., pp. 82-86.

certain that a *universal* deluge such as the Bible manifestly speaks of, could not possibly have taken place in the way described in the book of Genesis."

Upon this, and similar difficulties, I would remark ; —(1) that, as in the instance thus quoted, all of them are advanced in relation to one, and that always the most rigid, not to say the narrowest, interpretation of the passages in question ; and (2), that Dr. Colenso brings them forward as if the scientific testimonies he refers to (see pp. viii, and xxiv) were uniform and harmonious. But is this indeed the case ? We have already fathomed the depths of our examiner's inquiries into most of the questions about which he has written with such confidence ; and, though he has not given us the same means of testing his geological attainments, he seems to write as if he were ignorant of the fact, that, on many *fundamental* points bearing on the relations of geology to Scripture, the professors of this science are signally at variance. Such, for example, is the question whether the Mosaic period in the earth's history was, or was not, ushered in by any great catastrophe. From an immense induction of instances, D'Orbigny, in opposition to views received until very recently, appears to have established the fact that it was ; and that, "after the latest of many previous catastrophes, when the last strata of the tertiary period were deposited, the most recent exertion of creative power took place, and the globe was peopled

with the tribes which now inhabit it, including the human race.” Thus the latest conclusion of geologists appears to bring them into nearer agreement with the testimony of Moses. And that there is, in fact, no discrepancy between “*Genesis and Geology*” is well known to be the opinion of men whose honesty, as well as their competency, to speak on such a subject is beyond all question. The adjustment of this controversy, however, lies beyond my purpose, nor indeed have I any anxiety about the matter, for reasons that will appear in the following extract from an admirable paper by the late De Quincey, which I would strongly recommend to Dr. Colenso’s notice.

“It is made impossible for Scripture to teach falsely, by the simple fact that Scripture on such subjects will not descend to teach at all. The Bible adopts the erroneous language of men (which, at any rate, it must do in order to make itself understood) not by way of sanctioning a theory, but by way of using a fact. The Bible, for instance, *uses* (postulates) the phenomena of day and night, of summer and winter; and in relation to their causes, speaks by the same popular and inaccurate language which is current for ordinary purposes, even amongst the most scientific of astronomers. For the man of science, equally with the populace, talks of the sun as rising and setting, as having finished half his day’s journey, &c., and, without pedantry, could not in many cases talk otherwise. But the results which are all that concern Scripture, are equally true, whether accounted for by one hypothesis which is philosophically just, or by another which is popular and erring.

“In geology and cosmology the case is stronger. *Here* there is no opening for a compliance even with *language* that is erroneous; for no language at all is current upon subjects

that have never engaged the popular attention. Here, where there is no such stream of apparent phenomena running counter (as in astronomy there is) to the real phenomena, neither is there any popular language opposed to the scientific. The whole are abstruse speculations, even as regards their objects, nor dreamed of as possibilities, either in their true aspects, or their false aspects, till modern times. The Scriptures, therefore, nowhere allude to such sciences, either as taking the shape of histories, applied to processes current and in movement, or as taking the shape of theories applied to processes past and accomplished. The Mosaic cosmogony, indeed, gives the succession of natural births; and probably the general outline of such a succession will be more and more confirmed as geology advances.

“. . . God by a Hebrew prophet is sublimely described as the *Revealer*. . . . But of what is He the Revealer? Not surely of those things which He has enabled man to reveal for himself, but of those things which, were it not for special light from heaven, must eternally remain sealed up in inaccessible darkness. On this principle we should all laugh at a revealed cookery. But essentially the same ridicule, not more, and not less, applies to a revealed astronomy, or a revealed geology. As a fact there *is* no such astronomy or geology: as a possibility, by the *à priori* argument which I have used (viz. that a revelation on such fields would counteract *other* machineries of Providence) there *can* be no such astronomy or geology in the Bible. Consequently there *is* none. Consequently there can be no schism or feud upon *these* subjects between the Bible and the philosophies outside.”²⁴

In regard to the probability of which this writer speaks, as to the agreement of the “general outline of the succession” described by Moses, with the conclusions of science,—this, as you know, has been wonderfully realised. The inspired language, viewed in this

²⁴ *Miscellanies*, (1st ed.), &c. pp. 206–208.

character, is signally, may we not say miraculously, conformed to facts on which all men of science are accordant. As, for example, (1) in its describing the creation of light before the manifestation of the sun ; and (2) in its representation of the orders of existence according to the relative succession in which all geologists now agree to represent them. If Moses had told us that "God created the sun," and then "light was," as if light were indeed wholly dependent on the emission of the solar rays ; or, again, if he had in any way interchanged the order in which he has actually presented the vegetable, the reptilian, and the mammalian orders ; then, undoubtedly, we should have been troubled by instances of palpable discrepancy, between the two Records, in the Word and in the World. But how different is the case as it actually exists ! It is the same in other instances, so that we may confidently say that, so far as science can be permitted to give any depositions on the subject, it has not yet evoked any testimony that need disturb our assurance that here, as in all his pages, this "holy man of God" only spake as he was "moved by the Holy Ghost."

If we cannot affirm more than the absence of that contradiction which our assailant has alleged in this instance, this is sufficient for my purpose at this point. Though, indeed, I believe that in this, as in the instances we have examined in detail, much more than this *silent* accordance will be discovered by those who take up the sacred volume in the spirit in which it

justly claims to be received. Such persons will—nay, they continually do, tell us that they discern an agreement which is ever strengthening between their assurance of the Divine origin of Scripture, and their views, in relation to all parts of it, of what science has surely learned. In other words, they find, in this instance, as in those we have above investigated, that alleged difficulties have been converted into proofs, and confirmation.

And let me say in conclusion, that by this experience we are again reminded of the true method wherein we should conduct the controversy with all forms of unbelief such as that which is brought before us in this volume. That is to say, it plainly teaches us that, instead of immediately replying to any of these casual random assaults on detached passages of Scripture, we should begin by showing that before they can be considered, there are previous questions which under the strongest necessity must be first determined: the character in which the whole volume is put forward, its claims and its sanctions, must be ascertained before these difficulties of detail can be treated,—nay, before they can be understood. I think it has been shown in these pages, that this method brings into view presumptions and evidences, in the light of which difficulties such as the one consideration insisted on with any effect in this cruel and foolish volume—absolutely disappear. And such will be the case in regard to all similar difficulties. “They one and all,” says the author of *Restoration*

of *Belief*, “derive any semblance of importance which they possess, from misapprehending the true principle of Biblical interpretation. Until this *is* understood, it would seem not merely a waste of time to follow and reply to these futile cavils, but a logical mistake.” In the same manner he again remarks, “In dealing with imperfectly instructed readers, it is always an easy task to dislodge materials that have no cement, and to strew the ground with the ruins of a structure which has not settled down on its foundations, and has no coherence. Because it is so easy to do this, writers who are impatient to win notoriety, and who would fain be followed by troops of disciples, address themselves without scruple to those whose consent, when obtained, has no value; and whose plaudits should make a wise and sincere man blush.”²⁵

Such writers there will always be, and alas! in places where of all others we should least expect to find them. But words fail us if we try to describe the ignominiousness of the work, in which the ignorance of the uninstructed, and the disadvantages of the neglected, are thus needful for their success. You will naturally judge, from what you know I have elsewhere written at length upon this subject,²⁶ that I here use the word “disadvantages,” in view of what I do not shrink from calling the needless blemishes and obscurities that rest on our English version of the Scriptures. Only

²⁵ *Restoration of Belief*, pp. v., vi., 18.

²⁶ *Scripture Studies*, pp. ix.-xvii., 381-386.

let these occasions of difficulty be removed, and then the guilty assailants of our faith and hopes will be deprived of the chief instrument whereby they effect the mischief that is done by them: they will then be bereft of the main agency, which, in awful forgetfulness of the woe denounced by Christ Himself, they employ in raising stumbling-blocks that may cause the overthrow of many for whom He died.

APPENDIX.

“*Here, then, assuming the identity of our Scriptures of the Old Testament with those writings as they existed in the days of Christ,*” p. 14.—Of course it is not the absolute identity, word for word, of any existing recension of the Old Testament Scriptures with the sacred text, as it was read by our Lord, which is here assumed. Such identity evidently is impossible on account of the errors and faithlessness of copyists, and of the manifold other causes of imperfection to which all ancient documents are liable in their transmission. But that the actual differences are so inconsiderable, that they need not be taken account of so as seriously to qualify the above assumption, will appear from these considerations, viz., (1), That the Masoretic text, which may be called the *textus receptus* of the Old Testament, was edited by men in whose mutual jealousies we have a security that in the main it was correctly given by them. And (2), That, as our means of correction in cases where there is reason to doubt the integrity of their text, we have (α), The old Jewish versions, of which some, e. g., the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, and the Targums, were made centuries before the Masoretic recension was put forward; (β), The Christian versions, such as the Syriac and the Vulgate, which also long preceded that recension; and (γ), Quotations from writers more ancient than the Masoretes. By the use of these means of correction we can assure ourselves, in any *single* instance, that we are reading, as nearly as is needful, or *desirable*, the very language of the sacred text, as it existed in the time of Christ, and to which He referred when He spake of The Scriptures. And here one

cannot help expressing the wish that *such* a recension of the *entire* Old Testament were undertaken by the Church. Our want of it is one of the causes which call such volumes as this of Dr. Colenso's into existence.

P. 63. I here append some examples, taken from Dean Graves' *Lectures on the Pentateuch*, and from Blunt's *Undesigned Coincidences, &c.*, of the "internal evidences" alluded to. Thus writes Dean Graves (Lect. iii.) :—

".... There are coincidences of a less obvious nature, more circuitous and indirect, which occur in the statement of particular facts, and deserve to be accurately attended to, as supplying still more decisive characters of truth and authenticity. In delivering rules about the leprosy, it is said (Lev. xiv. 34), 'When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession,' ye shall do thus and thus. I notice this instance, because that a house is spoken of, not at all with a design to mark the circumstance of their not yet being come into the land of their possession, but is of necessity introduced from the nature of the case. The subject here is the discovery and the purification of leprosy. As to this, particular directions are given with respect to a *house*, but nothing is said of a *tent*; whereas, with regard to the impurity contracted by the presence of a dead body, all the directions relate to a *tent*, and nothing is said of a *house*. Now, this difference is, by a little attention, easily accounted for; the writer applies the rule about the purification from a dead body, to the object then most familiar with him, a tent. And as its lying in a house would produce no effect different from its lying in a tent, and require no difference of purification, he says nothing about a house, but leaves the nature of the thing to suggest the regulation when it should become necessary. Whereas, in detailing the rules for discovering and purifying the leprosy, all the materials of which tents are made, wool, and canvas, and leather, are particularised, as exhibiting each of them peculiar symptoms of the

plague; and this being done, it was unnecessary to say anything of a tent itself; but, as the materials of a house were quite different, and the appearances of infection in it peculiar, this required a particular specification. All this has the appearance of reality, and is exactly the way in which an eye-witness would have spoken; but it is such a difference as a writer of fiction would scarcely have thought of.

“Different circumstances occur in the detail of other directions, which seem to supply more decisive characters of truth and authenticity, because they display coincidences more minute, or more circuitous and indirect. Thus it is mentioned that Aaron, as High Priest, and his family, had charge of the Ark of the Lord and the furniture of the Holy of Holies; but they were to be carried, during the progress of each march, by an inferior family; and the writer remarks, these were not to approach them until ‘Aaron and his sons had made an end of covering them, at the commencement of the journey.’ (Num. iv. 15). What forger or mere compiler would have thought of such a circumstance?

“A coincidence still more remarkable on this subject is the following:—In the third and fourth chapters of Numbers, the parts of the Tabernacle to be carried by each family of the Levites, on the march, are minutely specified. The fifth and sixth are taken up with a detail of laws entirely unconnected with this subject; the seventh begins with relating that the different princes of Israel made an offering of six covered waggons and twelve oxen, which Moses employed to carry the Tabernacle, and distributed to two families of the Levites, ‘according to their service;’ (for the third were to carry the part assigned to them, the furniture of the Holy of Holies, upon their shoulders); to one are assigned two, to another four waggons. The reason of this inequality is not specified; but, on turning back, we find that the family to which the four waggons are assigned, had been appointed to carry the solid, and therefore heavy, parts of the Tabernacle, its boards, and bars, and pillars; while that family to which the two waggons are assigned, was appointed to carry the

lighter, its curtains and coverings, its hangings and cords. Such a coincidence as this is extremely natural, if Moses, who directed this matter, recorded it; but is it not wholly improbable that a forger or compiler should think of detailing such minute particulars at all, or, if he did, should detail them in such a manner as this? The more minute and apparently unimportant such coincidences as these are, the more unlikely is it they should arise from anything but reality.

“Another coincidence of a somewhat similar nature is the following:—In the second chapter of the Book of Numbers the writer describes the division of the twelve tribes into four camps, the number of each tribe, and the total number in each camp. He fixes the position each was to take round the Tabernacle, and the order of their march; and he directs that the Tabernacle, with the camp of the Levites, should set forward between the second and third camps. But in the tenth chapter occurs what seems at first a direct contradiction to this; for, it is said, that after the first camp had set forward, then the Tabernacle was taken down; and the sons of Gershon, and the sons of Merari, set forward, bearing the Tabernacle; and afterwards the second camp, or standard of the children of Reuben. But this apparent contradiction is reconciled a few verses after, when we find that, though the less sacred parts of the Tabernacle, the outside tent and its apparatus, set out between the first and second camp, yet the sanctuary, or Holy of Holies, with its furniture and the ark of the altar, did not set out till after the second camp, as the direction required. And the reason of the separation is assigned—that those who bore the outside tabernacle might set it up, and thus prepare for the reception of the sanctuary against it came. Would a forger or compiler who lived when these marches had wholly ceased, and the Israelites had fixed in the land of their inheritance, have thought of such a circumstance as this?”

In his *Undesigned Coincidences*, &c., after detailing many similar examples, Blunt writes (pp. 95–106):—“I doubt not that many examples of coincidence without design in the writ-

ings of Moses have escaped me, which others may detect, as one eye will often see what another has overlooked. Still I cannot account for the number and nature of those which I have been able to produce on any other principle than the veracity of the narrative which presents them. Accident could not have touched upon truth so often ; design could not have touched upon it so artlessly ; the less so, because these coincidences do not discover themselves in certain detached and isolated passages, but break out from time to time as the history proceeds, running witnesses, as it were, to the accuracy, not of one solitary detail, but of a series of details, extending through the lives of different individuals relating to different events, and dating at different points of time. For I have travelled through the writings of Moses, beginning from the history of Abraham, when a sojourner in the land of Canaan, and ending with a transaction which happened on the borders of that land, when his descendants, now numerous 'as the stars of heaven,' were about to enter and take possession . . . and (everywhere) I have found *consistency without design*. . . .

" . . . I have found it in the death of Nadab and Abihu, as compared with the remarkable law which follows touching the use of wine, and in the removal of their corpses by the sons of Uzziel, as compared with the defilement of certain in the camp about the same time by the dead body of a man. I have found it in the gushing of water from the rock at Rephidim, as compared with the attack of the Amalekites which followed ; in the state of the crops in Judea at the Passover, as compared with that of the crops in Egypt at the time of the plague of hail ; in the proportion of oxen and waggons assigned to the several families of the Levites, as compared with the different services they had respectively to discharge. I have found it in the order of march observed in one particular case, when the Israelites broke up from Mount Sinai, as compared with the *general* directions given in other places for pitching the tents and sounding the alarms. I have found it in the peculiar propriety of the grouping of the conspirators against Moses and Aaron, as compared with their relative situations in the

camp—consisting, as they do, of such a family of the Levites and such a tribe of the Israelites as dwelt on the same side of the Tabernacle, and therefore had especial facilities for clandestine intercourse. I have found it in an inference from the direct narrative, that the families of the conspirators did not perish alike, as compared with a subsequent most casual assertion, that though the households of Dathan and Abiram were destroyed, the children of Korah died not. I have found it in the desire expressed conjointly by the tribe of Reuben and the tribe of Gad to have lands allotted them together on the east side of Jordan, as compared with their contiguous position in the camp during their long and trying march through the wilderness. I have found it in the uniformity with which Moses implies a free communication to have subsisted amongst the scattered inhabitants of the East ; in the unexpected discovery of Balaam amongst the dead of the Midianites, though he had departed from Moab apparently to return to his own country, as compared with the united embassy that was sent to invite him. And, finally, I have found it in the extraordinary diminution of the tribe of Simeon, as compared with the occasion of the death of Zimri, a chief of that tribe, the only individual whom Moses thinks it necessary to name, and the victim by which the plague is appeased.

“ These indications of truth in the Mosaic writings (to which, as I have said, others of the same kind might doubtless be added), may be sometimes more, sometimes less, strong ; still they must be acknowledged, I think, on a general review, and when taken in the aggregate, to amount to evidence of great cumulative weight. . . . But though the argument of coincidence without design is the only one with which I proposed to deal, I may be allowed, in closing my remarks on the Books of Moses, to make brief mention of a few other points in favour of their veracity, which have naturally presented themselves to my mind whilst I have been engaged in investigating that argument ;—several of these also bespeaking *undesignedness* in the narrative, more or less, and so far allied to my main proposition. For example,—

“ 1st. There is a *minuteness* in the details of the Mosaic writings which argues their truth ; for it often argues the eye-witness, as in the adventures of the wilderness ; and often seems intended to supply directions to the artificer, as in the construction of the Tabernacle.

“ 2d. There are *touches of nature* in the narrative which argue its truth ; for it is not easy to regard them otherwise than as strokes from the life—as where ‘ the mixed multitude,’ whether half-casts or Egyptians, are the first to sigh for the cucumbers and melons of Egypt, and to spread discontent through the camp ; as the miserable exculpation of himself which Aaron attempts, with all the cowardice of conscious guilt: ‘ I cast into the fire, and there came out this calf ;’ the fire, to be sure, being in the fault.

“ 3d. There are certain little *inconveniences*, represented as turning up unexpectedly, that argue truth in the story ; for they are just such accidents as are characteristic of the working of a new system, and untried machinery. What is to be done with the man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day ? Could an impostor have devised such a trifle ?—How the inheritance of the daughters of Zelophehad is to be disposed of, there being no heir-male ? Either of them inconsiderable matters in themselves, but both giving occasion to very important laws ; the one touching life, and the other property.

“ 4th. There is a *simplicity* in the manner of Moses, when telling his tale, which argues its truth. No parade of language, no pomp of circumstance, even in his miracles—a modesty and dignity throughout all. Let us but compare him, in any trying scene, with Josephus : his description, for instance, of the passage through the Red Sea, of the murmuring of the Israelites, and the supply of quails and manna, with the same as given by the Jewish historian, or rhetorician, we might rather say—and the force of the observation will be felt.

“ 5th. There is a *candour* in the treatment of his subject by Moses, which argues his truth ; as when he tells of his own want of eloquence, which unfitted him for a leader ; his own want of faith which prevented him from entering the promised

land; the idolatry of Aaron his brother; the profaneness of Nadab and Abihu, his nephews; the disaffection and punishment of Miriam, his sister; the relationship which Amram, his father, bore to Jochebed, his mother, which became afterwards one of the prohibited degrees in the marriage tables of the Levitical law. . . .

“Then the situation in which the Jews actually found themselves placed, as a matter of fact, is no slight argument for the truth of the Mosaic accounts; reminded as they were by certain memorials observed from year to year, of the great events of their early history, just as they are recorded in the writings of Moses—memorials, universally recognised both in their object and in their authority. . . .

“Then the heroic devotion with which the Israelites continued to regard the law, even long after they had ceased to cultivate the better part of it. . . .

“Lastly, the very onerous nature of the law, so studiously meddling with all the occupations of life, great and small. This yoke would scarcely have been endured, without the strongest assurance on the part of those who were galled by it, of the authority by which it was imposed. For it met them with some restraint or other at every turn. Would they plough? Then it must not be with an ox and an ass. Would they sow? Then must not the seed be mixed. Would they reap? Then must they not reap clean. Would they make bread? Then they must set apart dough enough for the consecrated loaf. Did they find a bird’s nest? Then must they let the old bird fly away. Did they hunt? Then must they shed the blood of their game, and cover it with dust. Did they plant a fruit tree? For three years was the fruit to be uncircumcised. Did they shave their beards? They were not to cut the corners. Did they weave a garment? Then must it be only with threads prescribed. Did they build a house? They must put rails and battlements on the roof. Did they buy an estate? At the year of Jubilee back it must go to its owner. This last, in itself and alone, a provision which must have made itself felt in the whole structure of the Jewish commonwealth,

and have sensibly affected the character of the people; every transfer of land throughout the country having to be regulated in its price according to the remoteness or proximity of the year of release; and the desire of accumulating a species of property usually considered the most inviting of any, counteracted and thwarted at every turn. All these (and how many more of the same kind might be named) are enactments which it must have required extraordinary influence in the lawgiver to enjoin, and extraordinary reverence for his powers to perpetuate."

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